

MEMOIRS

OF A

Man of Pleasure,

OR THE

Adventures of Versorand.

VOLUME II.

THE FOURTH EDITION.



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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
VERSORAND.
PART IV.



FROM that moment my thoughts were wholly bent upon returning to Paris. My Surgeon, about fifteen days after, advised me to go there. The desire of seeing my Mistress made me ask a furlough, which the condition of my wound made me soon obtain.

My leaving the army did me no prejudice. I was none of those whose wounds bleed afresh when they think proper, and to whom the air of a camp is never noxious, but the day before a battle. I had been several times solicited to leave the army, and it was rather giving my consent, than asking permission.

VOL. II.

A

I made

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I made my emissary Felix undergo a very strict interrogatory, but he was more artful than I; he made me insensibly let him into the secret of what the Priest had told me, and built, upon that foundation, a history of which I was the dupe, and I really believed he had been told in Brittany what he related to me upon his return.

The journey having extremely fatigued me, I was a considerable time at Paris before I could leave my room. Some friends were so kind to come and divert me, and I was the more obliged to them, as I was more afraid of myself. In effect, the moment I was alone, so many disagreeable ideas oppressed me, that I fell into a sort of lethargy, of which my Surgeon dreaded the consequences. He shrewdly suspected that my heart was under the tyranny of love, and begged to be admitted into my confidence; assuring me, that if his endeavours could prove successful, he would procure me the tranquillity of mind of which I had occasion. Prepossessed in favour of my confident Felix, and dubious of my Doctor's discretion, I told him that he was mistaken about the state of my mind.

Felix was continually running up and down the town to find out Mademoiselle de Florian, but to no purpose; he gave me every
day

day an exact account of what steps he had taken, and made me every day more uneasy. Grief constantly retarding my cure, a slow fever ceased me, which lasted for a year, and reduced me to a frightful state. I was twenty times within sight of death, and as it was the only remedy to my distresses, I viewed it without dread. The cruelty of my parents had made me a little cool with respect to them, so that I remained six months without writing. But they always heard of me by means of Madam de Rillac, who had kept a constant correspondence with them. I neither saw this lady, nor any that belonged to her, being resolved to have no connexion with a woman who had been the cause of all my misfortunes.

One morning whom should I see enter my room but my father, who, on the sight of his dying son, swooned away in an elbow-chair. This accident frightened me, and was the occasion of my being thrown into a deep fainting fit. When we came again to our senses, Monsieur Doran embraced me, and we began a conversation as regular as my languid condition would permit. I learnt from him that Monsieur de Florian was dead, and that they had concealed this misfortune from me, to prevent the affliction they knew it would give me. As for my dear Mistrefs,

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he assured me they knew not where she was. He said this with such an air of sincerity, and appeared to be so much affected with my melancholy condition, that I could not allow myself to think he deceived me. I very sincerely, and without ceremony, told him that there was no cure for me but death, unless I found Mademoiselle de Florian again. The obstinacy of my passion made him tremble, because he despaired of discovering what was become of her.

The pleasure of seeing my father once more, and of finding him the same kind parent he had always been, made me more joyful than could have been expected from one so wretched, and his presence no doubt accelerated my recovery. In a month I was in a condition to go and take the benefit of the country air; thereafter I returned to Paris in reality very weak, but strong enough to permit me to see my friends. Monsieur Doran left me to return to Brittany, promising to consent to my marriage with my Mistress whenever I thought proper, and never more to mention Madam de Rillac. He withdrew the money which he had deposited in this lady's hands, gave it to me, and, besides, paid some debts that I had been obliged to contract to fit me out for the campaign, which happened to be at the time
when

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when I had no assistance from my family. By these supplies I found myself at once in easy circumstances.

My first care was to frequent all public places in town, persuaded that if Mademoiselle de Florian was in it, I should find her out. I got my friends, therefore, to present me in all the good or bad companies; I increased as much as possible the number of my acquaintances. Such a rambling life was fatiguing and irksome; for the more people we frequent, the more sots we find, and the more opportunity we have of chusing our friends well. I acquired some at that time whom I shall always esteem.

I happened to sit one evening at supper in a house next to a young man of the most amiable figure, and who was even so beautiful, that the graces of his person seemed to be more suitable to a woman than a man. I bore the name then of the Marquis Doran; he heard me named, and looked at me with a particular attention; but I took little notice of it in that instant. I was too much taken up with the desire of finding the qualities of the heart and mind corresponding with a physiognomy so promising. I made some enquiry about him, and was told that he went by the name of the Marquis de Rambert; which was all I could learn for this time, only

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I perceived that he was sprightly and witty, but so very light that it bordered on folly. I was sorry for it, without being able to resist something within me that spoke in his favour, for which reason I resolved to know him better, and even to become his friend, if I found him capable of friendship. As he had access to all the best houses in Paris, it was no difficult matter to find him again. I was told that the Marquis was one of those men who disdaining to borrow any lustre but from their birth, consecrate themselves to an indolent life, and have no other occupation but pleasure. I was informed that he was married, that he had a very lovely wife, and that if I desired to be acquainted with her, I must apply to himself; that he had no greater pleasure than to procure acquaintances to this fair lady. It was sufficient for me to know that she was his wife to extinguish all curiosity of seeing her. I only sought Mademoiselle de Florian.

Monsieur de Rambert seemed to desire a nearer acquaintance with me, and was curious to know the situation of my heart. I loved him, and could not hinder myself from satisfying him. He pitied me much, and said that my Mistress ought to be very much obliged to me for the pains I took to find her out; and even engaged to assist me in the search. In one word, he appeared to interest

terest himself so much in my affairs, that I valued his friendship much more than before.

New misfortunes occasioned my separation from a friend, whose attentions served at least to comfort me. I received a letter from my mother, who wrote that my father was dangerously ill. I took post directly for Brittany, but did not arrive soon enough to have the pleasure of seeing him alive. My mother, who had been struck with the same *coup de soleil*, was in a condition to make us apprehensive of her death too; she held out, however, a month, with such a violent headache, that she could not bear the least light or the least noise.

The day before her death, she required my promise to marry Madam de Rillac, but you may judge of the violence of my passion for Mademoiselle de Florian, since I had resolution enough to refuse a mother expiring. I told her all that I thought capable of making her forget this affair, and as she insisted, I was hard-hearted enough (I confess it to my shame) to reproach her with all the misfortunes I had met with, in a manner indeed respectful, but still affecting in these last moments. She yielded at last, had the goodness to ask me pardon for all the chagrins she had given me, and confessed that my father had

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had not been at variance with me but by her solicitations.

It is needless to mention my grief for the loss of two persons so dear to me. You know my heart, and you ought to render me justice in believing that I was very much afflicted. For almost a whole month I totally forgot my love. In fine, my duty calling me to Paris, I returned thither. The first thing I did was to go to my sister's Convent, and to mingle my tears with hers, doing all I could to comfort her. I gave her, in her Convent, all the little necessaries of which my mother's bad humour and resentment had deprived her. I augmented her pension, and told her that the greatest pleasure she could do me, at all times, would be to give me occasions of sharing with her an estate as much hers as mine.

I did not fail to inform myself about the Marquis de Rambert. I was told that he was gone to pass the fine season at a country seat in Picardy; this news vexed me, being by his absence deprived of the pleasure of seeing him; I was not in the least acquainted with his wife, otherwise I should have gone and remained some time with them in the country; but decency retained me. I resolved, however, to avoid a like inconvenience for the future, to get myself introduced to this lady upon her return to town.

Two

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Two days after, I wrote to the Marquis, who came himself with his answer. His journey to Paris was on purpose to see me. I thanked him sincerely for his attention, he made me the compliments of a real friend upon the death of my parents, and desired I would go along with him to his country seat. I excused myself in a polite manner, but he was pressing, and I at last consented to go as soon as I came off guard. He waited for me, and we both set out together. As we went along, he entertained me with the accomplishments of his lady, in a manner that astonished me in a man of such a superficial air.

When we arrived, the Lady was gone to make a visit about two leagues off, where she was to pass the greatest part of the day. The Marquis took the opportunity of her absence to shew me his house. I found it handsome and well built. The apartments were more commodious than magnificent, but nothing was wanting. In the evening, while we were taking a turn in the garden, word was brought that the Marchioness was arriving, upon which we went to join her; but hearing that her husband had brought a friend with him from Paris, she came to us. O heavens! it was Mademoiselle de Florian. You may judge of my astonishment. She threw herself upon a bank with
a loud

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a loud shriek, and a moment after fainted away. I did the same, my surprise being equal to hers, and both of us under the same embarras. The Marquis, however, with great difficulty brought us to our senses ; our eyes happened to meet, which confounded us more and more. I was the first who broke silence to discover the mystery to my friend.

Alas ! said I, where have you brought me ? you are the husband of the very person whom I have been so long in quest of. What have I done to you to give me thus my death ?

Madam de Rambert made me a sign to retire, which I obeyed without knowing what I did. She spoke a few words to the Marquis, who came after me, and we went together into the castle, leaving the lady in the garden. He sent her woman to conduct her to her apartment, where she shut herself up, and did not appear at supper. The Marquis made her excuses to the company, pretending she was a little out of order. I made a poor figure at table, scarce so much master of myself as to see where I was. After supper the Marquis conducted me to my chamber. He told me that his wife had been very much struck with seeing me, and that she did not chuse to expose herself any more to such inconveniencies. I loved the Marquis, I adored his wife, what must I do ? I answered that I
should,

should, while I lived, be the humble servant of Madam de Rambert, that she might give her orders, and I would obey. He made no answer, which I ascribed to politeness, and promised to be gone next morning very early if he would lend me his post-chaise. No truly, said he; you shall not stir from this.

He then recounted a long history of his amours with Mademoiselle de Florian, after which we parted.

What a dreadful night did I pass in this house! what melancholy reflections did I not make upon the subject of my passion, upon the recompense I received, and, in short, upon the caprice of mens fate, who lose, almost without perceiving it, the advantages that they have, with the greatest earnestness and care, sought after. At four I rung for my servant, whom I questioned particularly to learn if he knew any thing of the melancholy event that oppressed me, but he answered me so naturally that I was easy upon that score. I found a sort of satisfaction in concealing my misfortune; alas! was it for that less real?

About an hour after, I was asked at what time the chaise should be got ready for my return to Paris. After the obliging manner in which Rambert proposed my staying, this question surprised me; however, I took my resolution

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resolution at once, and departed directly before the family was awake.

I arrived before night at Paris, but found in it no diminution of my torments, rather the contrary. I wanted to be at Madam Rambert's, to know the motives that had induced her to dispose of herself. Thereafter I found that design improper, and I rather chose to wait till she returned; a moment after I thought it proper to write to her, and so began a letter, which I burnt before it was finished. In fine, I got myself persuaded that I must never more see Monsieur de Rambert, nor his lady.

The Marquis had not the same thoughts, for upon his arrival at Paris two months after, he made me a visit. I received him with more ceremony than friendship; I could not see with any sort of satisfaction the man who made me so unhappy. He complained of the reserved air which I affected, in so sweet and amiable a manner, that I could not resist him. I restored him to all my former friendship, even before I told him that he had lost it. How unreasonable are you, said I to him? you alone know how much I am to be pitied, and you alone are averse to my complaining! for I must not conceal from you (the last time, however, that I shall mention it) that I adore Madam
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de Rambert, and will adore her while I live. Excuse this confession in the mouth of a man who loved her before you. Your happiness is an ample reward for the generous compassion you have for me. He appeared to be extremely affected with my case, and squeezing my hand, went out without speaking.

I was eight days without hearing of him, but at length he returned, and begged I would go to Madam de Rambert's. She is beautiful, said he, she loved you; but I am her husband, I know her, and am not afraid of her. Visit her; enjoy, at least, that innocent pleasure, it will perhaps be easier, upon seeing her, to convert your love into friendship, than to forget her by absence.

This proposal, singular as it was, infinitely pleased me; I allowed myself to be conducted by this complaisant husband, I even was bold, or, rather, vain enough to promise myself the giving him a very bad return to the good he intended me. This idea was offensive for Madam de Rambert, and that was enough to dissipate it as swift as lightning. Nothing was visible to me but that Lady's virtue, and I continued to love her without any hopes of a return.

She received me with great politeness, but I never found any opportunity of speaking to her in private. She even contrived it so,
that

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that I was not admitted when she happened to be alone, which seldom was the case. I passed thus two months, in the cruel pleasure of seeing my Mistress in the arms of another ; chusing rather to be an eye-witness of his happiness and my own misery, than to consent not to see her at all. The Marquis made me one in all his parties. One day we went to dine at one of his friend's seats, a little way out of town. The house was beautiful and sumptuous, and we could not do the master a greater pleasure than to examine his magnificence. (He was a Financier.) We first visited the apartments, and after dinner went into the garden. At the lower end of a parterre well laid out, and as large as the back front of the house, we found several walks. Every one followed the route that presented itself, and chance ordered it so, that I was left alone with Madam de Rambert in one of these walks. She perceived it, and seemed to be under some concern. Fear nothing, Madam, said I, you are never more at liberty than with me. I know your state and my misfortune, and I would rather die than fail in the respect that I owe you. Agreed, said she, but this will lead us to Love discussions, which I am resolved not to hear. I know you, Monsieur Doran, continued she, and confess that I am
afraid

afraid of you, since I perceive that you have the same passionate air as when you loved me. When I loved you, Madam ! replied I with vivacity, I never ceased one moment from adoring you. It was in your power to make me completely wretched, but not to render me worthy of my misfortune. Ah ! Sir, answered she, you have an air of assurance more suitable to your trade than to your heart. But let us drop that subject. You have taken your resolution, I have taken mine, and I would not, for a great deal, be found in the wrong to a man whom I love. What, Madam, replied I, do you call it taking a resolution, to cease writing to one, when more than a year passed without having the least news ? when one does not so much as know where the person is on whom our happiness wholly depends ? I do not complain of your negligence, said she, I rather complain of your inconstancy, and that you had so little regard for me. I deserved not that you should have left me in the manner you did ; but once more, let us drop that subject ; such reproaches can be of no use to you, nor is it very becoming in me to make them.

By this time we were got to the end of the walk, where we met with some of the company, whom she joined directly, so that

it was impossible for me to come at an explication of her mysterious discourse. In vain did I endeavour to find her alone, she avoided it so carefully, that I was disappointed. I wrote her a letter, or, rather, an exact relation of what had happened since her father's departure from Paris for Brittany, which I ended with protesting that every particular was strictly true, and that my only view was to let her see that I had, upon no occasion, deserved to be abandoned. To this I had no answer. I only remarked that she looked upon me with more contempt than anger. This piqued me, and I resolved, at any rate, to have an explication with her.

I asked her the favour of giving me an opportunity, which she flatly refused. I went to her house, at hours in which I thought I might find her alone, but then the doors were shut against me. In fine, I resolved to put her husband's complaisance to the last trial. I made him acquainted with my insufferable perplexity, not forgetting to prevent his taking any umbrage at the step I intended to take, by assuring him that the day of my explication with the Marchioness should be the last time, during my life, that I should see her. He made me promise that I would not execute that resolution, and appointed to call upon me next morning, which he did accordingly,
and

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and carried me in his coach to his own house. Madam de Rambert was as yet in bed, and it was in her apartment what they call *petit jour**. The Marquis was my introducer into her bed-room; she was surprised, but did not seem to be angry. After we had all three conversed together about a quarter of an hour, Rambert left us, and we remained alone.

She judged that I would ask for the answer of my letter; she rang the bell, a waiting-maid appeared, whom she ordered to bring a little writing-case, in which I perceived a great many of my letters. When the maid was gone, the Marchioness told me, presenting me the letter I had wrote her some days before: Here is your romance, Sir, and here is the answer; giving me another letter, which I opened with precipitation. I was highly provoked on reading this letter, which was conceived nearly in the following terms.

I know not, Mademoiselle, if you still love me, but what I know is, that I love another better than you. I shall, however, conclude the marriage, if it be your father's intention, that I may not be worse than my promise. I dread, however, the consequences of such an engagement. To prevent them, I advise you to dispose of yourself, because there is but small appearance of a return of my love to you.

LE MARQUIS DORAN.

* The hour that a Lady receives visits in her bed.

Ah! who has been so bold to write you such a letter in my name, cried I? What, Madam, was not this injurious style enough to prove to you that it came not from me? Heavens! is it upon this that you have disposed of yourself? Yes, without doubt, answered she, it is upon this letter, which is from you, every thing proves it, the writing is yours, and the seal is yours. Besides, the silence you kept with me for so long a time is sufficient to persuade me of your infidelity.

Since that time, Madam, said I, looking at the date of this letter, I have wrote to you more than sixty times. I never knew any thing of it, said she, laughing; but this is enough, you know your fault, ask me no more. If you chuse to have your letters, here they are at your service. Alas! Madam, said I, with tears in my eyes, my case is too lamentable, and myself too wretched, to give occasion to pleasantry. I protested solemnly that I did not write this letter, and that I never imagined what it contained.

And pray how did it then come to me, replied she? The negative, Monsieur Doran, is a poor resource. Nevertheless, I will believe you, endeavour to persuade me. I give you two days to procure evident proofs of what you advance. Take the letter, and in three days, at the same hour, provide yourself

self with what will justify you, or never see me more.

I left Madam de Rambert without replying. I could not imagine in what manner I should proceed, or how to contrive matters so as to give her satisfaction. However, the fear of losing for ever the pleasure of seeing her, which was the only thing in the world agreeable to me, set my imagination to work, which, though it made extraordinary efforts, produced no suitable expedient. I passed the whole day in a terrible perplexity and agitation. In the evening a fancy struck me that my laquais Felix, whom I had sent to Brittany, had not given me a faithful account of his commission, and that his report did not agree with what the Priest, whom I saw at the army, had told me. I was lying with great tranquillity in my bed, where I endeavoured to call back to my memory all that related to my love, to the most minute circumstances. These ideas, though remote, being at this time very interesting, threw me into a sort of meditation resembling sleep. I was drawn out of this state by feeling the bracelet, to which my Mistress's picture was tied, falling from my arm, where I always wore it. I opened my eyes and saw Felix endeavouring to take the picture out of the sleeve of my shirt, into

which it had fallen. I was not master of my first cholerick transport, I laid hold of my pistols, fired one of them, and happily shot this wretch only through the arm. My other servants came running on the noise, and found him stretched on the floor, bathed in blood. I sent for a surgeon, who dexterously repaired the fault of my vivacity. So soon as the wounded man could speak, I went to his chamber, where I asked him what he wanted to do with my bracelet. The pain he felt, and the fear of death made him, once in his life, speak truth. He confessed, asking me pardon almost at every word, that Madam de Rillac had promised him twenty louis for the picture and the diamonds with which it was ornamented; that since my arrival in Paris, he had received all the letters that came for me from Brittany; that he carried them to this lady, who gave him a louis for each letter only to read it; that all those which I wrote to Mademoiselle de Florian, were intercepted by her waiting-maid, who sent them back to Madam de Rillac, into whose service this girl had entered when Mademoiselle de Florian left Brittany. He told me I would find all these letters in his trunk, which I opened, and accordingly found a great many of them. He was now too far advanced to stop. I shewed him the letter which Madam
de

de Rambert had given me, he pretended at first not to know the hand, but at length told me that Madam de Rillac had obliged him to imitate my writing. On this confession my anger redoubled, I was no more master of myself, and I had the cruelty to blow out his brains with my second pistol, which I held in my hand to intimidate him.

Next day the surgeon came to visit him. He was brought into my room, I thanked him for his care, and told him that his patient was dead; he appeared to be extremely surprised at this accident, but as I paid him well, he believed me, and went away.

I passed that whole day in reading Monsieur de Florian and his daughter's letters. I found such tender sentiments in them that I was quite desperate to see that I had lost, without resource, a person who loved me dearly, and in the possession of whom I should have been completely happy.

On the day appointed, I went with the packet of letters to Madam de Rambert's. She and her husband were waiting for me.

Come, said she, I am ready to hear you.

And I, Madam, answered I, ready to justify myself; but my happiness is nothing the nearer for that. Forgive me, my friend, said I to the Marquis. The unfortunate cannot help complaining.

Monfieur de Rambert's
B 4. presence,

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presence, replied the Lady, ties us up to no reserve, and I even chuse that he shall hear what you shall say to prove your innocence, because I have no design to conceal the consequences from him. I related to them all that had happened at my lodging, and produced the letters. Their surprise gave me a satisfaction which I could by no means account for. Alas! what had I to hope for.

Though we cannot, strictly speaking, said Madam de Rambert, verify these facts, but by the presence and even confession of the waiting-maid, whom I left in Brittany when I set out for Paris, yet as she has entered into the service of Madam de Rillac, that proves their intelligence, and I must conclude, all things considered, that you, Sir, looking at me, are fully justified, and I in the wrong to you. If my friendship can suffice to comfort you for the loss of my heart, it is yours. I promise to be as true a friend as I was a tender Mistress, and I am sorry I can offer you no more.

Dear Marquis, said she, embracing her husband, let not these regrets give thee umbrage, they only flow from the goodness of my heart, and thou ought to see nothing else in them. Rambert appeared stupified, and answered not a word. As for me, I painted my misfortune in the most lively colours, and concluded with asking permission to wear her picture. No, said

said she, that would look like love, for which reason you must give me it back. I directly untied it from my arm, and presenting it to her, she laid hold of it without saying one word, but I could not hinder myself from seizing on her hand, and kissing it as well as the picture, watering them both with my tears. I had the satisfaction of seeing that she was very much affected with my melancholy situation, and shed tears as well as I. This proof of her sensibility augmented mine. My tears soon flowed more abundantly, and we remained for a considerable time without speaking. Our eyes were reciprocally fixed on each other, and darted glances full of that real grief which silence so eloquently expresses. At length the Marchioness spoke first.

I do not believe, said she, that Monsieur de Rambert will take it amiss that I allow you to keep my picture ; I therefore give it you, as the only reparation, in my power, of the injustice I have done you. Nevertheless it is proper to let you know the reasons that may be urged in vindication of my conduct. I consent to your reproaching me of having been guilty of an indiscretion ; but I must not let you remain ignorant of the motives and circumstances that determined me. She here made a stop as if she wanted to ask her husband, if such a narration would be agree-

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able to him. He embraced her, saying a great many obliging things. We all three went and seated ourselves upon a sofa, the Marchioness between Rambert and me, and she thus continued her discourse addressed to me.

At my father's death I was full twenty-five. I enjoyed all my privileges, and resolved to be my own mistress. I settled the affairs of my estate agreeable to the schemes that you and I had concerted at different times. I wrote you many letters, without receiving any answer; here they are. Their dates prove what I advance. Word was brought me that you moved in the high sphere of gallantry at Paris, and in a constant round of uninterrupted pleasures. This false insinuation gave the alarm to my heart, and determined me to write you a last letter full of tender reproaches for your negligence. Eight days after, I received the answer which I put into your hands. I saw by it that your inclination to me was not only quite extinguished, but that you boldly and, indeed, contemptuously declared your indifference. A procedure so outrageous on your part, made me in a manner desperate. From that moment the calm and peaceable country life became tiresome. I did not chuse to go and live at Rennes among my relations and friends, for fear they should take notice of
my

my melancholy. I was afraid to remain at my seat in Brittany, as I ran the risk there of seeing you, if you should come to visit your family. At length I resolved to come and live at Paris, not with an intention to find you in it, but to enjoy the pleasures which this great city furnishes to those that are free, and can dispose of themselves as they think proper.

As I was upon the road, I considered that I should always be obliged to observe certain decorums, to which a young woman unmarried must be subjected, and which debar her of pleasures without lessening her inclination to them. I fell upon an expedient of which the singularity pleased me, and in the execution I formed a new idea of pleasure. I make no difficulty now of revealing my uncommon and, perhaps in the opinion of some, whimsical scheme, since I find you still love me, and that nothing but the malice of Madam de Rillac has so long occasioned a misunderstanding between us. I went straight to Versailles, where I made it my business to find out a waiting-maid fit to act the part I intended for her. I at last found one, and it is she you now see before you, under the name of the Marquis de Rambert. Ah! heavens! cried I, quite astonished, is it possible that Mademoiselle de Florian can as yet make me happy? Yes, my dear Doran, answered

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ed she, I can, and mine depends upon it. But I must finish my story. I judged that I could attempt the execution of my designs with Rambert, the name of my pretended husband, to which I have only added the title of Marquis. I began with making the proposal to her, and she agreed to it. I continued in furnished lodgings at Versailles, from whence she went often to Paris to buy what was necessary for her disguise. When she was equipped in a manner suitable to the part she was to act, I sent back to Brittany all the domestics I had brought with me, and we came by ourselves to Paris, taking at first furnished lodgings, under the names of the Marquis and Marchioness de Rambert, and hired a coach till such time an equipage was provided. I had brought a large sum of money with me to Paris, and I easily fitted up the house where we now are, and in which we have all along lived. My steward, who is the only person who knows my secret, has with great exactness remitted my rents, and no inconveniency hath interrupted the pleasure I find in enjoying the liberty of marriage, without being apprehensive of what is disagreeable in it.

You have loved, my dear Verforand (continued the Marquis Doran) you will therefore easily conceive, that this moment was so charming

charming to me, it made me quite forgetful of my former misery. We made mutual protestations never to part any more, and our thoughts were wholly taken up with the conclusion of a marriage which we both had desired, with equal ardour, for so many years. In order to this, there was a necessity of owning to the whole town, where we were both very well known, that the Marquis de Rambert was a chamber-maid: to this Mademoiselle de Florian would by no means consent. We were long casting about for an expedient to conciliate our love with the regard she thought due to the public. At length we fell upon one which we imagined practicable and without danger. Mademoiselle de Florian made her pretended husband a handsome present, ordering her to go to Rouen, where she was to change her breeches into petticoats, and not to appear at Paris, at least, for a year. This arrangement taken, the Marquis de Rambert set out one morning, in his post-chaise, without attendants, to femalise himself at a distance from the curious Parisians. Some days after, Mademoiselle de Florian went to Brittany, leaving at Paris all her domestics, taking only a waiting-maid whom I had privately hired for her, and who did not know her mistress.

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I followed her all along at a small distance, but did not join company till we came to Alancçon, and then went together to our own seats, where we were married a little time after.

The height of pleasures belongs to those who have experienced the height of misfortunes. Mine were so lively and perfect, that it is impossible, by any description, to do justice, or, to speak more properly, not to degrade them. My service requiring my presence at Paris, I left Rennes. So soon as I was free, I made it my business to visit all the neighbouring country about Paris twenty leagues round. I found a pretty estate and house near Soissons, which I bought, and Madam Doran came to it a little time after. I passed my whole time with her there, and only left her when I was obliged to mount guard.

Mean time she wrote to Paris that the Marquis de Rambert was dead. All her domestics went into mourning by her orders. None of her friends were ignorant of this news, but none of them could make her the compliments usual on such occasions, because they were absolute strangers to the place of her retreat.

Towards the end of her mourning she returned to Paris, where she lived in her own house as usual. She affected to keep company with all her acquaintances, particularly the
women

women whom she knew to be the most indiscreet, telling them by way of secret, that she had chose me for her second husband ; that we had loved one another from our infancy, and that her passion, not fully extinguished by her first marriage, had not permitted her to defer any longer a second ; that, however, she did not resolve to take my name till she had thrown off her widow's weeds. These marks of confidence had the effect she intended. In a week the whole town knew our affairs, and we received, from all corners, compliments on our marriage. She then made no difficulty of taking the name of Countess Doran, and I took possession in her house of the Marquis de Rambert's apartment. A little after I obtained the company in which I served, and have commanded it ever since, but the unhappy affair that forces me away, will no doubt make me lose it.

The large estate of the house of Florian being joined to mine, Madam Doran and I enjoyed forty thousand crowns a year. She loved expence, but I loved her too much to find fault with it. I only ordered matters so that we should not touch upon the capital, since I could not determine her not to spend the revenue.

An officer of horse of my acquaintance, a man of honour, but of a sour temper, and
none

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none of Fortune's favourites, begged, at different times, that I would lend him money, which I did with a pretty good grace, but he made no returns; on the contrary, he continually renewed his demands; so that I was at last obliged to refuse him. He was offended, and in his anger told every body, that, rich as I was, I would not lend a friend such a trifle as twenty-five pieces. He accompanied his complaints with injurious language, and gave himself the liberty of saying several times that Monsieur de Florian had been an usurer; otherwise his daughter could not have been so rich.

Wicked people, always ready to foment quarrels, recounted these idle stories, which would have dropt of themselves; and fools fond of news had the indiscretion to tell me every word: I was piqued, and told the tale-bearers, that the names of my father and my father-in-law were known; that they had both served with honour, and lived in a manner suitable to persons of quality. They seemed to believe what I said, and yet the story gained air and credit. The injury which such discourses might do me, augmented my indignation, and I resolved to be revenged. One day in my way to the Opera, I perceived my man in the middle of St. Honoré street, opposite the convent of the Fathers of the Oratory.

tory. I made my coach stop and alighted. After some sharp reproaches we drew, I ran him twice through the body, and he died on the spot.

What terrible news for Madam Doran! I could scarce get myself prevailed with to inform her of the misfortune; nevertheless I had at length the courage. We ran about among our best friends, who advised me to fly. I yielded to their advice, and to the solicitations of a tender spouse, who fancied every moment that they were coming to drag me out of her arms, and whom I adore after ten years marriage, as much as the first day I saw her. I parted with her, my dear friend; I left at Paris all that is dear to me in the world: a charming wife and four infants, too young as yet to advance themselves without my assistance, but the more to be pitied, as they are ignorant of their misfortune.

I said all that I could to comfort my friend, but his grief was too deeply rooted to admit of lenitives.

We arrived happily at Bourdeaux, where we found letters from Madam de Vilmane, and from the Countess Doran, to the directions we had given them. We learned nothing but what was extremely afflicting for
both

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both of us. We were taken up with one another's affairs with that cordiality which true friendship, augmented by the conformity of misfortunes, gives. The Officer's family whom my friend had killed, left no stone unturned to accomplish his ruin. As for me, my absence confirming the suspicions, afforded strong presumptions of conscious guilt. We went from Bourdeaux to Bayonne, and from thence to Spain. We were exposed to many hardships on the other side of the Bidassoa, a river, or, rather, a torrent that separates France from Spain. We saw Fontarabie and Andaye, and every where remarked great poverty, which induced us to make more expedition than we had intended, that we might get at places where we could find something that was eatable. We flattered ourselves with having found such a place when we came in sight of Iron, the first market-town in the Spanish dominions, but we were greatly mistaken; for our entertainment was so wretched, that we looked upon it to be purely imaginary. Nothing there appeared to be real, but the necessity of paying very dear for the pleasure of seeing pass and repass a great many dishes almost empty, and served one after another by tedious intervals. We were used pretty near in the same manner at St. Sebastian. The name of city which they give to this place

place, had made us conceive favourable ideas of it, and hopes of better entertainment than we had hitherto met with; but they were ill founded. This determined us to push on to Madrid, distant about eighty leagues, without stopping. Monsieur Doran and I were quite novices in the business of travelling, and we purchased the pleasure of instruction at a very dear rate.

The custom in this country is that travellers carry along with them their provisions, such as they can meet with, and to mend the matter they are obliged to consume them in little dirty Cabarets, the sight whereof is enough to pall the keenest appetite. It is there where the greedy-gut should go to become Philosopher, and learn to eat only for the support of life.

At length we arrived at Madrid. The Spanish frugality did not at all agree with two men, who, upon leaving the best tables in Paris, had been almost starved during a long and fatiguing journey. However, we took patience, and contented ourselves with bare necessaries. After examining for some time the customs of Madrid, they appeared so dull and tiresome, that we shut ourselves up in an apartment which we had furnished, badly enough, but as well as we could in the French taste. There we passed the time in discoursing
on

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on our affairs, and in reading as many French books as we could find. One of Monsieur Doran's people was our cook, and by the means of seeing very little company, we led, in the metropolis of Spain, a life as indolent and tedious as if we had been in some little town in France.

Solitude soon displeased us; and we made some few parties of pleasure. We employed a whole month in visiting the Royal Palaces, the Convents, Churches, and some of the Grandees Hotels. We could not, in a manner, move a foot in the streets of Madrid without meeting with numbers of what they call Courtisannes. This vermin, common in all countries, enjoys more liberties in Spain, than any where else. Doran was taken with the agreeable chat of two of those nymphs, who were extremely witty, and spoke tolerable good French. My friend proposed supping with them, but I declined it, and he said no more upon the subject.

Three days after, having got up earlier than usual, I entered, without ceremony, into his chamber on the same floor with mine. I drew the curtain, and saw my friend stretched by the side of a very pretty woman fast asleep as well as he. I was vexed at my indiscretion, but was lucky enough to get out of the room, without the one or other's awaking.

I sat

I sat down to write a letter to Madam de Vilmane, full of sentiments of love the most respectful and passionate. Absence methought augmented my flame, her good-nature and generosity were ever before my eyes, and I was penetrated with the most grateful sense of the services she rendered me in my affair.

I had several times had occasion to see the Minister in France who had signed the Lettre de Cachet, which I had brought along with me. I imagined that it would be proper for me to put myself under his protection, and that equitable as he was known to be, he could not dispense with giving me his countenance.

I began with excuses for my boldness in not only stopping the King's order, but likewise carrying it out of France. Thereafter I gave him an exact account of all that had passed, or that could have any relation to the story of Javotte. I could not help painting the Abbé Ramy with colours somewhat black, but as I was unfortunate, could I be without animosity? I inclosed in my letter the King's order, and put the whole under a flying seal in the packet I addressed to Madam de Vilmane, begging she would get it delivered to the Minister, if she thought it proper, but not otherwise, because I would do nothing that she disapproved of.

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I do not know if the idea of Monsieur Doran's libertinism had given me a greater facility in expressing myself, but I found, on reading the letter, that an air of liberty ran thro' the whole, and my passion was painted in it with the most lively and delicate colours. Nevertheless, as there was nothing in it that could give offence to this lady, I sealed the letter and sent it away before Monsieur Doran appeared. I did not see him till dinner time; he spoke not a word of his Mistress, nor I to him. In the evening we went to the Play. We did not understand the language enough to have any pleasure in the plots or disposition of the pieces. I only imagined that the representation and decorations might divert us, and that we should look upon the whole as an agreeable pantomime; but we were very much deceived.

The Comedians in that country are at very little pains to please. Their quality of natives seems to give them an exclusive title to divert the public. Besides, idleness, which is the favourite Vice of the Spaniards, brings always crowded houses. Plain Citizens cloaths are commonly what they are dressed in, to represent the most illustrious personages of Greece and Rome. They have neither delicacy nor judgment, and their whole talent for declamation consists in speaking very loud, and in
violent

violent agitations upon the stage. In one word, the whole of their representation is pretty much of a piece with what we have in the little country towns in France by strollers.

The only pleasure I had, was to see just by us the same person whom I had that morning found in bed with Monsieur Doran, and to divert myself with the embarras which my presence put them in. In the evening at supper I wanted to try how far my friend would carry his dissimulation, and I asked him, when we should go and see the two pretty French women whom we had by chance met with.

To go and visit them, answered he coldly, we must first know where they live, which is a thing I am very indifferent about. Too much trouble and danger are often attached to the commerce of these Syrenes, and I am charmed that you refused accompanying me the day that I proposed giving them a supper.

How is this; said I interrupting him? You appear to be very much cooled upon this article; believe me, my friend, you are young. Such discourse does not become you. Me! replied he in a tone a little upon the fret, surely you joke with me. Do you imagine that a man who has been in the state of matrimony for ten years, cannot dispense with women for two or three months? Such warm desires are only proper for such batchelors as you,

I was

I was afraid he would at last lose his temper ; I changed the subject, promising myself to surprise him in such a manner, that he could no longer continue to impose upon me.

The next day I lay too long, but two days after I saw what I had already seen, and I awaked Doran, who was under the greatest confusion. Do not let me disturb you, said I, going out of his chamber, I only wanted to let you know that I am not the dupe of your pretended chastity : at the same time pulling the door after me without waiting for his answer. He got out of bed a little after, and appeared before me as a disciple before his preceptor. We were nearly of the same age, but bigottry had given me a turn to pedantry, and the influence of my misfortunes still augmenting my gravity, I moralised upon all occasions, and was oftener troublesome than agreeable. Doran let me say what I pleased, and had great patience, for I spoke a long time. I reproached him with giving headlong into a shameful commerce, of which the consequences might prove so fatal to him. In effect, the greatest part of the Spanish Courtisannes communicate the shameful fruits of debauchery, at the same time that they grant their favours. Moreover, said I, in two months time you forget a charming spouse, whom you formerly adored for several years without

without seeing her, or even the hopes of that pleasure. That is true (answered he, with that frankness which always accompanies good-nature.) I confess my foible. The girl whom you have seen with me, is an old Paris acquaintance that I found here by accident. I love women, and I am alone here. I have amused myself the more willingly, as I am certain this little intrigue can do me no injury with Madam Doran, who never can be informed of it. Be angry if you please, you will gain nothing by it. I do not love this creature, but I am resolved to amuse myself while I remain here. And you will not be very pressing to return to France, said I, laughing. Pardon me, replied he with vivacity. I desire nothing in the world more. Be assured, my friend, continued he, that I love my wife very much, that I even idolise her. Such transports will appear singular in a man whom you have caught in the conclusive acts of gallantry, but this proceeds from your never having been married. I love Madam Doran as my wife, her happiness is mine, and the idea of giving her the least uneasiness makes me desperate; but she is the very same person that has brought me four children whom I love. I have been attached to her ten years: I suppose you understand me. I love her no more as my Mistress. I admired the sub-

tilty of the distinction, and told him that I could approve of it, if Madam Doran were really happy. That is what you shall know from herself, answered he, upon our return to Paris. I will present you to her as my best friend, and you will directly have the same place in her good opinion. This compliment was followed with such warm encomiums on Madam Doran, that I was quite at a loss what to think of such a husband's conduct. I had indeed seen husbands and wives under a voluntary divorce on good terms, the husband with the wife's Lover, and the wife with her husband's Mistress. But I had likewise seen husbands extremely jealous, though very unfaithful to the nuptial bed, and their wives reduced to the most tiresome and even distressed life. Madam Doran was the first I ever heard of who permitted her husband to divert himself elsewhere, without thinking of being revenged. For nothing is more common in Paris, nor so commodious as revenge in such cases. I let my friend talk on at pleasure, reserving to myself internally a right to examine this prodigy before I gave credit to it.

Chance brought it so about that his imparting the secret of his good fortune to me, gave him a disgust to it. He told me of it a few days after, and I perceived that the Belle came no more to see him. He did not conceal his intentions

intentions of endeavouring to find out another to supply her place, and I did not pretend to dissuade him, believing that this notion would be insensibly dissipated.

One day he observed at the play an Actress who appeared charming to him. He made me take notice of her. I found her pretty, and even something more; but her charms made no impression upon me. The case was quite different with my friend, he was directly her conquest, and had no pleasure nor patience till the play was over. I frankly gave my assent to his taste in favour of this theatrical Princess; in which I hoped to find some diversion, having already some little knowledge of the Spanish, as I studied it every morning for a couple of hours. Monsieur Doran pretended to limit his pleasures to that of seeing and admiring his beautiful Actress, but what lover is there who does not say the same thing when his passion first begins?

French prejudice, not at all favourable to the reputation of Actresses, gave him hopes which he thought the more solid as he did not want money. He was pleased to impart his views to me, and as he was in a hurry to be happy, he appeared to me to be in the disposition of paying largely not the love but the complaisance of the Signora. I endeavoured to make him see the ridicule of such a project.

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I reproached him with having his whole thoughts taken up with his pleasures, while his distressed family languished in the expectation of the pardon of his crime. In fine, I attacked him upon the side of interest, and told him that it seemed Madam Doran pinched herself very much to send him money (in effect, he received such large sums that she certainly reduced her own expences, and that of her children) that he ought not only to make less than the value of three or four hundred louis purchase the fair Helena (the name of the Actress) but likewise write to his spouse to send no more money till farther orders.

I saw, upon this occasion, that my friend was one of those men with whom persons absent are always in the wrong. He really loved his wife, but not seeing her, he forgot her. The least pretty-faced girl appeared to him a beauty. When I spoke of Madam Doran, he remembered her; I insisted, he adored her, and was out of conceit with adventures. In this happy minute he felt the solidity of my reasons, embraced me, with thanks for my good advice, and we both wrote to Paris. He shewed me his letter to Madam Doran, tender and affectionate, and I remarked with satisfaction that he was touched with the manner in which I read it. I conceived great hopes from a conversion so sincere,

sincere, and it is certain, that he himself was in hopes of it as much as I. We did not go to the Play that day, first proof of reformation. We went to see a cabinet of curiosities, which a German exposed in a large hall, almost like our booths at the fair of St. Germain. We found a numerous assembly there, and were very well diverted. Doran had a good taste for Mechanics, he admired every thing, and made me take a more particular notice of what we saw, than I perhaps should otherwise have done, and with which I had no occasion to be displeased. The first thing we were shewn was a collection of shells fit for the amusement of fools, and the more capable of astonishing them, the less they were natural, for in all countries there are people who with enamel, gum, or vernish, form or assemble several shells, and make prodigies of them. They next opened a sort of large cup-board, ten foot high, and six foot broad. Four square pictures, each about three foot broad and five foot high, filled up the front. These pictures represented the four parts of the world. In Europe, for instance, we could see on one side, French men and women sumptuously dressed, on the other, English, Spaniards, Germans, and, in one word, of all nations. The men and women were employed every one according to their condition,

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the poor in hard labour, and the rich in pleasure.

We observed in every country the manners of pursuing the same aim, differing according to the climate and the goût of the nation. I speak of labours that tend to procure men the conveniencies of life. Arts, more or less cultivated, were every where to be seen, and even the workmen, who excel in every nation in a particular manufacture, were to be distinguished.

It is easy to imagine that these figures being very small, the skill of the artist consisted in rendering them distinct the one from the other. Every thing was in enamel. We admired every part of the world, and every nation in particular; in short, we were all so charmed, that we resolved to undertake the examination of each figure separately.

The master of this cabinet made us retire to a little distance, and then gave every one a spying-glass to observe this famous piece of work. - While we were placing ourselves, he put his four pieces in motion. By the help of our glasses we could then distinguish in the four parts of the world, that not one single individual is absolutely idle. We saw in France and other policied nations, the great, slaves to ambition, and the meaner sort slaves to them. The nobleman cringing
to

to his prince, despising his equals, and tyrannizing over his vassals. The Clergy reigning, in different ways, every where, and obedient no where. Justice still the same, but differently administered, according to the quality of the pleader, or the capacity of the judge. The Financers every where rich, useful to the great, onerous to the people, and beloved in very few places. The Merchants servile and complaisant to the rich, insolent and hard to the manufacturer, every where deceiving sots, and deceived by borrowers. The people, in fine, every where active and industrious in their poverty; insolent and idle the moment they lose sight of it.

There was not one single figure that had not its particular motion; and the whole was so well disposed, that in a single part of the play we could distinguish the dupe from the sharper, as well as it was possible for a disinterested spectator.

In about an hour all the movements stopt at once, and every figure remained in its first attitude. We then were entertained with the warbling of a great number of birds of different kinds, who formed a concert the more agreeable, as it approached the nearer to nature. There was no music-master whose regular contorsions, learned and commanding grimaces, might serve by way of direction and

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rule to these automatical musicians, and yet nothing could be more just and more harmonious than this symphony, which lasted above half an hour. This curious entertainment ended with the common-place things of curiosity. New shell-works, dried fishes, and other drolleries, with which in all countries certain people have the art of constituting to themselves revenues, casual, it is true, but which become stable and fixed by the means of idlers and fots.

We were so well pleased with the pictures, that we promised to return next day. I was curious to have some discourse with the German. We returned early, when there were but few in the hall. With the first glance of my eye, I perceived Segnora Helena, seated in a place where she could be seen to advantage. She was dressed rather decently than sumptuously, but she was an Actress and pretty, that was enough to attract the looks and contempt of the Ladies, and the ogling of the Petits-Maitres, for such there are in Spain, though different from ours in France: every country has its particular ridicules.

I always dressed in plain cloaths, and I was sensible I should made but a poor figure in the circle of those who were going to make their court to Helena, which determined me to retire from where she was. I thought Monsieur

Doran

Doran followed me, and when I had taken a place, I was surprised to see him in close conference with the Belle. He made a sign to me to approach, but I took no notice of it. I observed that he talked with her during the whole time that the curiosities were exposed. I did not conceive how he could entertain a Spanish woman so long with the little that he knew of the language. The Segnora went away alone, and my friend came to me.

Would you believe, said he, that the beautiful Helena is a French woman? I believe it since you say so, answered I coldly. Yes she is, continued he; she knows our language perfectly well, speaks of the principal town in France, and particularly Paris, as if she was no stranger to them. I answered, that all this might very well be, but that it gave me no great concern. He repeated twenty times, that she was a girl of the first merit. O! for that, said I, interrupting him, you will give me leave to differ from you. To be a player is a worse trade here than in France, and from thence I conclude that this Belle would not have come to Spain, had she deserved the encomium you are pleased to bestow on her. He was at first somewhat at a loss what to answer; he had no other resource but to make his defence upon the side of the mind and sentiments; but I at-

tacked him anew upon this article, by telling him that heroism is common in the mouth, but seldom to be found in the heart. When a woman has wit, and converses with men prepossessed by beautiful and persuasive eyes, it is an easy matter to shine on the side of sentiment. Conduct is the touchstone that destroys the glittering lustre of this pompous exhibition. I have no intention to attack the honour of the fair Helena, but as I do not know her, I may, without doing her injury, suspend my belief of her good or bad qualities.

Monsieur Doran finding that I was by no means prepossessed in favour of his Mistress, thought it was best to drop the subject, to which I willingly consented, and our conversation ran upon the beauties of the cabinet, or rather, on the pictures that we had seen.

Five or six days after, being fatigued with studying, I went one morning to my friend's chamber to propose our going out, but I found him not, nor came he home to dinner, nor in the evening till it was late. I had waited for him. He made me polite but frivolous excuses. As I knew him well, I let him go on. He was affected with my complaisance, and without my asking him any questions, confessed that he had had the happiness of dining with Helena at an Actress's house, an acquaintance of our banker; that
he

he had notice given him of this dinner, and that he had gone out in the morning, to know if the party was not put off.

I saw with grief that my poor friend was running headlong to the precipice, and I pitied him before-hand for all the evils which, I foresaw, were going to fall upon him. Consider, said I, that others beside you keep company with this pretty girl, and that it is very probable they love her. How do you know but that in the number of her admirers there is one whom she distinguishes? If so, you will give offence to that happy lover. A Spaniard is jealous even to madness, and you will either be assassinated, or must fight. My dear, added I, you are no longer in France; you have only here one friend, without credit, and without acquaintances; you have neither protectors to save you, nor a wife to comfort you. Is it possible that the misfortune, which has forced you to fly your native country, does not render you more prudent?

He listened, groaned, and went to bed without saying one word.

The following days were passed pretty well; we went to the Play, and saw Helena, whom I found so amiable, and otherwise so accomplished, that I could no longer blame my friend's attachment. However, as I am for directing my aim to a fixed point in all things, I en-

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deavoured to penetrate into the consequences of this wretched passion. Doran was powerful enough to carry Helena to France, if she were inclined to go along with him ; and this was what I most dreaded. I artfully sounded some Spaniards, who frequented the play-house, and who consequently must be supposed to be pretty well acquainted with the anecdotes of that theatrical world. They all agreed that the beautiful Helena had no lover. A conduct so singular astonished me, and I could scarce give credit to what was told me. One of those whom I consulted, said, That a proof of this girl's virtue was her not being rich. Her extraordinary conduct is not to be accounted for. The Grantees, of the first class, of our Court have undergone the mortification of her refusals, and it is generally thought that she has a secret inclination. She is a fool, said an old libertine that listened very calmly ; does it become such a girl as she to have a heart ? Morbleu, let her have eyes and sense to gain money, and hands to receive it. This is what is proper for such a female as her Ladyship, and not a heart and inclination. I laughed at this old gentleman's reasoning, and I conceived an esteem for Helena, at the same time that I fancied Doran would not succeed. There was but little probability that this Belle
would

would yield to a private French gentleman, after having resisted the Spanish Grandees, as amorous no doubt, and far richer.

Nevertheless, appearances gave soon the lie to my conjectures. The lovely Helena gave Monsieur Doran and me an invitation to come and see her. I considered that my being included in the invitation was owing to no other reason, but my being Doran's friend; I determined however to accompany him. I felt a certain pleasure in having an opportunity of seeing Helena, though my esteem, from this moment, was greatly diminished.

We were not slow in our compliance with the fair one's invitation. There were no marks of opulency to be seen in her habitation. She received us with the most polite decency, animated by French liberty; telling us that she could not resist the desire she had of asking of Frenchmen news of their country and hers. She afterwards begged to know our names. Doran took this upon him. At the name of Verforand she looked me full in the face, and then swooned away in my arms. We had a good deal of difficulty to bring her to herself again. I was under very great concern. I felt fears for the life of this lovely person, that seized me without being able to conceive the cause. She opened her eyes, beautiful to admiration, and in that moment
very

very languishing. She turned pale, and in appearance was going to fall into a second fit. I then became desperate, and my endeavours to prevent any more faintings were so eager, that Doran believed I was become his rival, and this idea gave him as much concern as the condition in which he saw her. In fine, she found herself better, and by degrees was perfectly restored. She stretched out her hand to me, I kissed it; she drew it back, and threw herself at my feet. This motion so stupified both Doran and me, that we had no thoughts of raising her up. She remained long in the same posture; I at last remarked it, and wanted to have her seated: I saw she wept; I was moved, and mingled my tears with hers, without knowing for what reason I took so great a part in her affliction.

Who are you, said I? How came you to know me? By what fatality comes it to pass that I am under such a concern for you?

Alas! said she, you are Monsieur de Versorand; do you remember the unfortunate Hortensia? Yes, answered I, with an angry tone, as the most ungrateful of her sex.

Ah! replied Helena, with a voice half smothered with heavy sighs, Hortensia was my mother, and I would have you to know, said I, interrupting her, that I am sorry such a girl, as you seem to be, springs from
from

from so corrupted a source. She always assured me, however, answered Helena, that you was my father. At this word, tears and sighs forced her to be silent. I could not withstand so moving a confession, and a mixture of pleasure, uncertainty, and regret, occasioned such a revolution in me, that I in my turn was seized with a fainting fit. When I recovered out of it, I found myself in the arms of this dear daughter (for she was such to my heart) we endeavoured to calm the agitation into which the force of nature had thrown us, and Helena thus continued her discourse.

You know, Sir, that my mother had the misfortune to leave you and go to Normandy, where you found her keeping the Goldenlion inn in the town of *****. When she left Paris, she carried me in her womb. The fear of becoming dearer to you by my birth, and of not giving herself to a man whom she loved, obliged her to conceal from you her being with child; she made an elopement. I hurry over my mother's faults; nevertheless, if I should allow you time to reflect, you are too just to make me accountable for them. I came into the world in the same town of *****, five months after my mother settled in it. My imputed father had me baptized

tized in your name, assuring the Curate that this was his true name, and what he went by no more than a nick-name that had been given him. My mother was positive I should carry your name, and with justice, since she was already with child when she fell acquainted with the person who carried her off. I was put to nurse in a suburb of the town, where my mother had great care taken of me. She never durst mention my birth when she returned to you, being apprehensive that you would look upon me as the fruit of her passion for another. When I had attained to the age of five, I was brought to Paris, and put in pension. She came often alone and on foot to see me, and only staid but a moment.

She thought a proper occasion offered of bringing me nearer you, and she laid hold of it; alas! it was the cause of our misfortunes and of her death.

Monsieur Dulemont, your brother, saw my mother often at your house. As they were conversing together one day, he told her that he wanted to execute a project of education, which he had imagined, to render a young girl as learned as it is possible for a man to be. That he wanted a child of six or seven years, of whom he would take all possible care. This tempted my mother to reveal her secret to Monsieur Dulemont,
who

who promised to keep it, and take upon him the charge of my education. All which was punctually executed. You saw me sometimes then, and my mother always remembered, with pleasure, the favourable things you said of me every time that you returned from your brother's. Unfortunately for us, he fell in love with my mother. He told her of it, making large promises if she would leave you for him; but she was under the greatest obligation to you, and you had forgot her past faults, in a manner, to prevent her falling into any new ones. Six months passed, during which he constantly solicited her to come and live with him, but to no purpose. About the expiration of the sixth month of fruitless endeavours on his part, you was then at your seat of D***, and he at his of ***** eight leagues distant; he sent her word that if she did not come next morning at five to your father's gate, with her waiting-maid (whom he had gained) he would send me to Martinico with one of his friends who was going there. You may judge of the embarras of a tender mother, and without assistance. The unfortunate Hortensia was tempted to let you know her case, but she knew your vivacity, and dreaded it. She foresaw that you would go immediately and demand me of your brother, and take
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me from him either by consent or force. She knew him to be obstinate ; alas ! what man is not so when he loves ? She left you therefore once more to preserve me. She chose rather to be guilty of a new crime, than to see, perhaps, one brother dip his hands in the blood of another. We remained together six months at Monsieur Dulemont's, at the expiration whereof he took my mother along with him to England. On his return he passed the winter at Paris, and in the spring prepared to come and stay a year in Spain. He had formerly lived at Madrid, he loved the country, and had some views of settling in it for good and all, but afterwards changed his mind. My mother, not being able to bear the thoughts of remaining a whole year without seeing me, asked permission to carry me along with her, and obtained it. We arrived here, where Monsieur Dulemont continued a year, as he had proposed. During his stay he fell acquainted with the Prince D****'s Mistress ; she loved France, and hated her lover. She listened to the proposal of leaving Spain, and your brother made the proper dispositions for his departure. He took from my mother and me the greatest part of what he had given us, signifying that he intended to leave us at Madrid. The very evening of that terrible
 declaration

declaration, the Prince being in the country, he carried off his Belle, and left Madrid, to which he durst not return since. Next morning my mother upon getting out of bed was apprised of this misfortune. Her whole stock consisted of thirty louis, and some cloaths. Monsieur Dulemont's people having neglected to satisfy some merchants and tradesmens bills, she paid them, and had only four louis remaining. It is needless to excite your compassion of our unhappy situation by moving reflections; the bare recital conveys an idea of its horror. My mother remained with four louis three hundred leagues from her own country, without resource, without friends, and almost without acquaintance. An Actress, whom I succeeded, named Dona Leonora, knew a little of us. She had seen us at Monsieur Dulemont's, who had been acquainted with her when he was formerly in Spain. She could not hear of the barbarous manner in which we had been treated without indignation, and was so generous to take us to her house. My mother was pretty much mistress of Spanish and Italian, and had a tolerable good voice. Dona Leonora recommended her, and she was received in some concerts, where she got wherewith to subsist with honour. She loved ease, we lived commodiously, but saved nothing. I was
destined

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destined to the same trade, but I had little or no voice. Dona Leonora formed me for the stage, and made me an Actress. Novelty pleases in all countries. My first appearance was brilliant, I was extolled above the greatest Actresses in the world. Every thing seemed perfection in me, even to my very blunders and grimaces. I studied hard, and in the sequel was less applauded, though I deserved more. At length my benefactrix died. Necessity made me be found excellent, and I succeeded her upon the stage with success. My mother then left off singing. Such a fatiguing employment had been extremely hurtful to her breast; she languished for three years, and then died, recommending to me to seek all opportunities of making myself known to you, Sir, and to quit the stage if you were so good as to do any thing for me.

Helena here ended her narration, shedding abundance of tears. She presented afterwards a little box, in which I found a baptismal certificate, two rings, and my picture set with diamonds, which her mother had still kept, notwithstanding the misery to which she was reduced. At the sight of proofs so convincing, I could not contain my joy. I took my dear Helena in my arms, and loaded her with the most tender caresses. Libertinism never
loses

loses any thing, and often gets the better of sentiment. A proof of this is, that looking on Helena, and finding her so lovely, I was vexed that she was my daughter. However, Reason, and the pleasure of being Father, soon destroyed this idea, and I loved as a parent this charming daughter with all my heart. She was pretty well lodged, and offered us her apartments ; but I did not think proper to accept of them ; I was with Monsieur Doran, who could not decently lodge in her house. We therefore remained where we were. Only I sent our cook to my daughter's, and we went regularly there to eat. I desired she would give notice that she was to quit the stage, and I wrote the whole affair to Madam de Vilmane, for whom the quality of Helena's Father had not in the least altered my sentiments. I informed her that my design was to put the girl into a Convent, that I might remain master of my estate to make her an offer of it. I was in such terms with her ; and these liberties that supposed a passion approved of, did not offend her.

I had no occasion to tell Monsieur Doran that I could not allow of his making love to my daughter. He considered of himself that this must be the case, spoke no more of his passion for her, and thought of his affairs. He was beginning to be extremely uneasy,
when

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when his wife arrived in a post-chaise for two persons, with his pardon. What tender attention ! he received his dear spouse as she deserved. In effect, where is that woman to be met with at Paris, capable of undergoing the fatigue of a three hundred leagues journey, to have the pleasure of notifying good news to her husband ? Madam Doran was extremely civil to me, and, in delivering me a packet from Madam de Vilmane, assured me that my affair was in a fair way, and that I might soon expect to hear happy news.

My misfortune was softened by the tender and ingenious consolations of my daughter, who became more and more dear to me. However, my tenderness for her did not diminish my love for Madam de Vilmane, and my long absence from my native country did not vex me, but because I was deprived of the pleasure of seeing her. I soon lost the company of Monsieur Doran, who returned to France to take possession again of his post, which the prudence of his friends had made him abandon, and to which the King's goodness restored him. You must acknowledge, said he, in a private conversation we had together the day before his departure, that I am the happiest husband in the world. Ah my friend, how dear are Madam Doran's attentions to me ! they penetrate me with the
most

most tender gratitude. How I repent my having endeavoured to indemnify myself for her absence ! Is there any crime more heinous than to be unfaithful to a woman so perfect ? Has one man been able to forget her one single moment, she who ought to be loved by the whole world ? I embraced my friend, his present sentiments made me forget the grief which his irregularities had given me.

A few days after the departure of Monsieur Doran and his Lady, I had the pleasure of seeing my daughter discharged from the stage. Madam de Vilmane wrote to me that nothing was so ridiculous as my project of putting her into a Convent, that I ought at least to make her fortune, since I could not legitimate her ; and as for the offer of my estate, it was a piece of pleasantry which would divert us on my return ; that in the mean time I must send her Helena to Paris ; that she would love her as my daughter, and would give her every thing that was agreeable.

It was with some difficulty Helena could be brought to think of leaving me, but the Countess de Fuentes, who was a French woman, having always honoured her with a particular regard, determined her at last to go. This Lady loved Paris, and had prevailed with her husband to go and pass in that gay place the remainder of his days. They had their
only

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only son along with them, and were so good as to take charge of my daughter, who could not let slip so favourable an opportunity. Thus I found myself alone in a country which displeased me much upon many accounts. In this situation I had no greater enemy than myself, I mean that I was tired to be by myself, and that I was continually afflicted, and without cause. In fine, my affairs were not so desperate as to throw me into so great a perplexity. It was all that could have been indulged me, if I had been apprised of the loss of my process with Javotte's parents, and consequently under the necessity of passing my life far from the country of my nativity, from Madam de Vilmane, and from my daughter.

I had strength of mind enough to seek occasions to dissipate such melancholy ideas, by amusements. I went to visit every thing that could excite my curiosity. I frequented some acquaintances I had made during my residence at Madrid, but I carried my melancholy always about with me.

One day coming into my lodging, I found an old woman who gave me a billet, in which I read a declaration of friendship that I had reason to ascribe to love, and I was invited to follow exactly the instructions which the old woman would give me. I gave this gallant embassadrix but a very indifferent reception

tion. I dismissed her without giving her time to finish a very smart encomium on her mistress, which she would absolutely have me to hear. The next day a new missive, and a new refusal. The lady was piqued, and continued to write to me, for fifteen days, letters tolerably witty, and all tending to engage me to make her a visit. At length she wrote to me in French, and this gave me a desire to know her, but I could not satisfy my curiosity, not knowing where she lived, and the mystery that accompanied her messages gave ground to think that it was no easy matter to get access to her. In Paris the house is the wife's, but at Madrid it is the husband's, who seldom approves of strangers introducing themselves without his permission. This Incognita finding that I accustomed myself to receive her letters without answering them, wrote me sometimes by post, and sometimes by messengers at hours when I was abroad, and it sometimes happened that I found her billets in my pockets, without knowing which way they had been put there.

Difficulty with me augments desire, and I resolved to have the honour of knowing a Lady who seemed to wish me well in so constant and singular a manner. I wrote a very polite letter to this Belle, and gave it to my people with orders to deliver it to the

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first messenger that came with a line from her. My order was punctually executed. In the evening when I came home I found a billet, of which the writing and style were very different from those I commonly received. Love spoke in it with great vivacity, but it was that love which becomes people of character, and which, however violent, always contains the passion within the limits of decency. I did not know what to think of this change. Methought that this and the former letters could not be from the same person. In short, I persuaded myself that it must be so, and that though I was not very fond of intrigues at Madrid, yet I was in a fair way of having two upon my hands at the same time. I was taken up with this reflection when a Duegna desired to speak with me. She said no more but bid me follow her; she was not the same I had already seen. I hesitated, but was in an instant determined. I must not, said I to myself as I was going, lose this occasion of seeing my fair Incognita, for it is surely she. She has made use of different writing to surprise me the more agreeably, and to give herself with me the air of a new adventure.

We soon came to the place where we intended. The old woman conducted me into a hall, where she shewed me the picture of
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the Lady. She appeared to be charming. I perceived that something more than mere curiosity entered into the desire I had to see her, and I was not much concerned about the consequences of this intrigue. The cunning Duegna took notice how much I was taken with the painting, and when she had given me sufficient time to feast my eyes with the delightful prospect, opened a closet, into which she led me and then locked the door.

I found myself in a temple dedicated to the Voluptuous Goddess, whose charms, elegantly displayed in four pictures by an eminent hand, were repeated in as many mirrors, artfully placed. A small number of wax-tapers illuminated the place, enough to prevent Love's losing its way, and gave but just so much light as was proper to preserve that degree of obscurity always necessary to animate pleasure.

Venus herself half naked was stretched at full length upon a sofa, which in its contrivance shewed that it was the altar of the Goddess, and could be extended by springs according to the ardour of the victims, and the variety of the sacrifices. My eyes were not sufficient to view so many charms, nor my imagination to conceive them. I was ravished, enchanted, when the old woman returned, took me by the arm, and made me leave

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this delicious place, without knowing where I was going, and without asking her. When we arrived at the end of my street, she left me, saying, I pity you, Sir, but take courage, we shall find a more favourable opportunity, the husband of the Segnora arrived a moment after you. I was afraid of his discovering you, and brought you out of harm's way.

I thanked her for her care, and to engage her to continue her good offices, offered her a few Spanish pistoles, which she refused. I was surprised with her disinterestedness, and insisted upon her taking the money ; but she turned quite angry, and gave me injurious language. This woman knew nothing of the custom in France.

The same day I received a billet of the same writing with the former, and conceived almost in the same terms. I still believed that my Incognita had a mind to divert herself, and I tried several ways to find out the old Duegna. I was beginning to despair of hearing any more of her, when one evening, as I was going into my lodging, I caught a little girl endeavouring to slip a billet into my pocket. I laid hold of her laughing, and presented a copy of the answer I had already made, and which I happened to have about me. At that instant appeared an old woman
whom

whom I did not know; she asked me, what I wanted with her daughter. I gave her the letter, which she eagerly laid hold of, and promised to deliver it carefully.

I waited all next day for the old woman, but she did not appear before the dusk of the evening, and in the billet she brought me I suspected, by the reiterated cautions of prudence, there were still fears of the husband.

We set out. About a hundred paces from my house the Duegna left me, and consigned me to another who waited for us, and this conducted me about as far as the first had done, and then presented me to a swinging fellow of a Negro, whose gigantic size, and brutal vivacity gave me but an indifferent opinion of my enterprise. He dismissed the second Duegna. I finished my course with him, which was no short one, and, in order to render the way less tedious, he made me a great many compliments on my happiness of having pleased his mistress, and several observations on the danger we ran of being discovered. Happily he spoke Spanish so wretchedly that I did not understand the half of what he said, and even this was too much. We at last arrived. At first we came into a large court-yard, which I crossed in the dark, and after that several halls which the want of light made me find vast. At length we came

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into a saloon well illuminated, and where every thing spoke magnificence. The Negro left me there alone.

Those who are guilty of faults are never rightly sensible of them, but when it is out of their power to remedy them. I called to mind the precautions that had been taken in conducting me, the figure and discourses of the Negro. All this made me repent of my having given a little rashly into this adventure. Madam de Vilmane came into my thoughts. She always triumphed there, but particularly when I was guilty of any imprudence. My reflections, however, could be of no service, I was embarked, there was no drawing back.

A charming woman, but not the same whose picture I had seen, came to awake me out of my dream. Her plain dress heightened her beauty. She looked at me without speaking one word. I thought it was my business to break the ice, and so I began a compliment upon her goodness; but what I said was flat and scarce common sense, because I was not in the use of making such formal speeches. Happily this Lady perceived my embarrass, and had the complaisance to extricate me out of it. Do not fatigue yourself in polite acknowledgements of my favours, said she, it is not my design to grant you any.
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The step I took in venturing to write to you, has, in reality, love for its motive, but though you are of a form sufficient to inspire it, mine flows from another source.

This declaration was not, to speak the truth, very flattering, but in my present disposition I could hear it without being greatly mortified. I was charmed that my love for Madam de Vilmane escaped the danger to which my curiosity had exposed it.

Dona Juanna is my name, continued the lady; I am daughter to a rich merchant, my mother died a year after my birth; and my father, who loved me dearly, had me brought up in his own house. His commerce obliging him to make frequent voyages to St. Domingo, I accompanied him several times when I was of age to support the fatigues of the sea. I had occasion to frequent French people, whose complaisant and polite manner gave me a favourable opinion of your nation. One, among the others, named Godfrey, found the way to my heart. Our love was of the same date, that is to say, our hearts were reciprocally touched from the first moment of our seeing one another. He could have no access to me, because my father, who was a Spaniard, and consequently suspicious, had

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me watched with great care. Godfrey could think of no better way of succeeding in his love than by attaching himself to our house. He therefore left a merchant whose book-keeper he was, and in a little time was received by my father in the same quality. He soon found a thousand opportunities of seeing me, and how could it be otherwise, since he loved me and that I seconded his endeavours? Upon a nearer acquaintance our love increased. Godfrey was too passionate not to push for the completion of his felicity, and my heart was too much in his interest to make him languish.

My father was rich, and proud of his opulence. I knew him too well to venture speaking of Godfrey as a husband. He was too violent, and would have been transported to extremities against both of us; the very thoughts of which made me tremble. We therefore concealed our marriage from him as we had our love. I told my lover all that I thought capable of engaging him to delay his triumph. He listened to my reasons very calmly, but instead of having any influence on him, he accused me of having less love than he; my heart, not capable of bearing this accusation, justified its passion at the expence of my duty and prudence.

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We lived together for four months, in all the delights that intoxicate happy lovers ; but we soon were exposed to the evils attached to pleasures that Reason condemns. I proved with child ; I lived under the eyes of a very rigorous father, and in the arms of a lover as much afflicted at my misfortune, as if it had been impossible to prevent it.

My big belly became more and more difficult to be concealed. I had gained my gouvernante, who was almost at her wits end, when a malignant fever, seized my father, and carried him off in eight days. Alas ! I must confess it, I was almost insensible of the loss I sustained, and only taken up with the pleasure of triumphant love. A son was the precious pledge of our mutual ardour, his birth cemented still more and more the union of our hearts, and I was publickly married to my lover, but lost him six months after. When we were married he took titles and a name which I knew nothing of before. He declared that he was of noble extraction ; that disorders of youth having drawn upon him the indignation of his parents, he had been sent to the Colonies. That upon his arrival he was made sensible of his errors, and that necessity had obliged him to make use of his talents. That by his application and the assistance of another Frenchman, he had quali-

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fied himself to keep merchants books. That he esteemed this employment, as it had procured him the happiness of possessing me. That he was resolved to return to France to see his parents, and to communicate to them the happy change that time had brought about in his conduct and fortune. That he would soon come back, and that we then might return to Madrid if I was attached to my native country, or go and live in France. I wanted to go along with him, but the season was not favourable, besides, we were loth to expose my son, in his tender age, to the inconveniencies of a voyage, for which reasons I remained, and Godfrey took shipping.

About a year after, I happened to meet with a merchant whose ship had failed at the same time with that in which my husband was, and bound to the same port. He waited till I should ask him news, before he thought proper to let me know that I was a widow.

An English Pirate of superior force, had attacked the ship in which was my husband, who, this merchant assured me, perished in the heat of a very obstinate engagement; that the vessel had been taken, and all the people, who were not killed, made prisoners.

I grieved for this loss not as a widow, but as a desperate Mistress. Every thing became insupportable, even to the very places where
my

my love had first taken its birth. I sold my plantations, and went to France with a view to settle there; but Marseilles, where I intended to fix, was not agreeable, nor was I any longer attached to a country by the only person who could make me love it. I returned to Madrid, where I consecrated my whole care and time to the education of my son, and the melancholy pleasure of shedding floods of tears for the death of his father. Don Antonio Perez, Alcade (this is what you call in France a Magistrate) was my neighbour. He had been my father's friend, though much younger than he. He was mine too, and rendered me considerable services in settling my affairs. Gratitude hindered me from denying him access to my house, where I received no company. A man is always charming where he is alone; comparison only discovers failings, and the different degrees of merit. I habituated myself with seeing Don Antonio, and though his assiduities were not agreeable, yet I suffered them. In fine, he spoke of love, and after resisting his solicitations for two years, I at last consented to be his wife.

I enjoyed a more peaceable than agreeable life, when four years after this marriage one of my relations, who had remained some time at St. Domingo, came and told me that

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he had seen Godfrey at Paris : I did not know what to answer, nor even what to think of it. I asked him many questions, but he had not spoke to my husband, only assured me that he was living ; adding, however, that he had informed himself about him ; that he had been told he was a widower of a woman whom he had married in the islands, and whom he much regretted. My heart, much more than his discourses, assured me of the life of my dear husband, and prescribed my duty. I am his wife, said I to myself, and he is still my lover. What do I here ? I have recourse to you, Sir ; assist me in making my escape from hence with my son. It is for this I wanted to see you. I heard such a favourable character of you from some of my friends and yours, that I have placed my whole confidence in you ; are my hopes built upon a wrong foundation ? Can you be insensible of the pleasure of obliging a countryman, by restoring what is dearest to him in the world, his wife, and his son ? Of that of withdrawing from a precipice, a woman less criminal than unfortunate ? In short, of that of giving a fixed and honourable rank to my son ? It is from you that he expects it. Here he is rich, but his riches may be carried off from him if he loses his mother in Spain. Whereas in France he will be a Gentleman, and not less

less rich for that, his tutorship being settled in such a manner that our flight can do him no prejudice.

I was stunned with Dona Juanna's proposal; however, as she appeared deserving of being assisted, I did not hesitate to promise her all the services I was capable of, and I even asked her, as a favour, to furnish me with occasions of obliging her. She was charmed with having gained me to her interest, and asked me when I thought it proper for her to be gone. I answered, that I thought the first step was, to be assured of her husband's being alive. She stopped my mouth upon this head, by shewing me a letter addressed to a Jacobin Monk her Confessor; by which the writer of this letter assured him that this Lady's husband was actually in France. This good Monk was privy to Dona Juanna's secret. My design, said she, is to conceal from my dear husband, my second marriage, since I am so happy as to have no children from it. The half of my fortune is in the hands of my son's tutor, as being the succession of his father. This tutor is a man of probity, and I am very easy upon that head. And as for the other half, here is the value, continued she, shewing me a little box filled with jewels. This is the treasure of Don Antonio Perez,
but

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but in carrying it off I do him no injustice ; the fortune I leave him here is of greater value. Take this little box along with you to your house. I absolutely refused it, and all her intreaties could not prevail.

It was impossible for me to avoid telling her who I was, and what had brought me to Spain. The hour approaching in which she expected her husband, we parted, and I was reconducted in the same manner that I had been brought. On coming home I perceived that the old woman carried something under her arm ; it was the lady's jewels, which she delivered to me. I was very much embarrassed when I found in my possession so large a treasure, more considerable still than I imagined, since in the sequel these diamonds were sold for near three millions French money. I carefully locked up this precious trust, and went to bed reflecting on the dangerous consequences that might attend the affair I was going to embark in. I was two days without hearing from Dona Juanna. I could not tell to what I should attribute her silence. I sometimes fancied that the husband had discovered the robbery of his treasure, and that he charged her with it. Sometimes I imagined that she had been stopped in her flight ; in short, I went so far as to think there was no truth in all that she had told me, and was

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at a loss to account for the confidence with which she had entrusted me with her jewels. On the other hand, it was impossible for me to conceive how an Alcade's wife could escape the pursuits of an innumerable multitude of under-officers of justice that swarm in Spain. If I am with her, said I to myself, where shall I conduct her, since I dare not return to France? What will become of me if we should happen to be arrested? Should I not deservedly be prosecuted by the Alcade as the ravisher of his wife? Who shall protect me here? If the endeavours of Madam de Vilmane and all her friends cannot procure me the pardon of a crime of which I was only in appearance guilty, could I here, where I am alone and unknown, avoid the punishment due to a real crime? I was plunged in these melancholy reflections, when in the evening of the third day Dona Juanna entered my room in a Jacobin's habit followed by her son. He was a child about eight years old, of a lovely figure. Were he bigger, said she, presenting him to me, he should accompany me in the same habit, but his tender age obliges me to leave him. It is in your hands I put him, Sir; you love solitude, lodge in some retired corner with this dear child, and when you return to France, bring him to the arms of his parents, according

ing to the direction that I shall give you. Do not be under any uneasiness about me ; the profound respect that is paid to this habit all over Spain, makes my flight quite secure. Besides, Don Antonio Perez is gone this morning to a country seat twenty leagues from Madrid, where he will remain three weeks, and before his return I shall be got out of Spain. If however some misfortune should happen, that I cannot foresee, you will either be informed of it by public report, or by Father Sebastian, a Dominican Fryar, who provided me with this habit. If I should happen to die, or that by the effects of the husband's revenge whom I abandon, I should be lost for my son, I beg you will send him to France, or conduct him there, and restore him to his father, whose true name you will learn from father Sebastian. Do not be offended that I have hitherto concealed it from you. I would by this mystery avoid the shame of rendering my misfortunes public, if it should happen that he whom I am going to seek, could not be found, or that he would not own me. Give me only a letter to your dear daughter, and another to the lady to whom you have addressed her ; this is all I have occasion for at present. Dona Ju-
anna was in haste. I wrote directly to Ma-
dam de Vilmane and to Helena. I then of-
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ferred this pretty Dominican money, but she shewed me a belt stuffed with Spanish pistoles, and a letter-case in which there were bills of exchange for upwards of forty thousand livres, to be paid in different towns of France. I wished her a happy journey, and we parted as night began. I was thus dispensed from accompanying her, which gave me great pleasure.

As I received but very few visits, I thought it was needless to change my lodgings. I gave Dona Juanna's son a chamber, where no mortal had access to him but such as I entirely confided in. When Don Antonio Perez returned, he soon perceived his wife's evasion and the loss of his treasure. I ordered one of my people, a man exact and faithful, to inform me of every thing that should happen with regard to that affair. He brought me daily news that made me tremble. The Alcade made the strictest search after Dona Juanna all over Spain, and she was the subject of general conversation at Madrid. The husband's friends published, that she would be found out, and that her death alone could expiate her crime. The wife's friends, to authorise her flight, ascribed a thousand defects to this Judge, and flattered themselves that he would never find her out. That sort of people who only shine in degrading others, pretended

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tended that Dona Juanna had left Spain with a lover with whom she had long kept company. From thence flowed an infinite number of injurious discourses, and scandalous anecdotes, which novelty brings in credit. In short, this fair lady was only protected by those whom we call the friends of the unfortunate. For there is every where of those compassionate minds, whose pity for all in affliction does so much honour to humanity.

As the number of the bad is every where superior to that of the good, my fears for Dona Juanna's son soon got the better of the confidence that the exactness, with which I had been secreted, ought to have given me. I was for two months cruelly tormented about the fate of the mother, and likewise about that of the son. In fine, a letter from Madam de Vilmane eased me of a heavy load. She informed me that Dona Juanna was arrived at Paris in tolerable good health, and without any misfortune.

I went to communicate this happy news to Father Sebastian, who received it with an astonishing joy, which acquired him my friendship. He was a venerable old man, whose noble and sprightly countenance gave him an air superior to his condition. He spoke of Dona Juanna's affairs with strength
and

and judgment. He had neither in his mouth nor in his heart the monastic cant. In short, to finish his picture I shall only add, that he was the first Monk that I ever thought worthy of esteem, and with whom I wanted to be in friendship. I did not conceal my sentiments from him, he thanked me for what he treated as the effect of politeness, and was not a bit the freer with me upon that account. I asked leave to come and see him again, which he granted, and by degrees we became truly friends. He insinuated a curiosity to know the reasons of my leaving my native country, and I told him every thing that had happened to me. He blamed my follies as a man of sense and essentially good, and pitied my misfortune as a true friend. He appeared to me to be so well instructed in the ways of the human heart, and in the customs of the world, that I took the freedom to ask him how he had acquired such knowledge? By my own proper experience, answered he. I have not always been of the order of St. Dominic. I was born to die in it, but I was ignorant of the decrees of Providence as to my fate. My birth promised me great advantages in the world; before I could attain to the enjoyment of them, I was, according to custom, to give, with loose reins, into extravagancies
and

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and follies, and to undergo all the racking pains and loathing disfigurements the consequences of ungoverned pleasure. All these trials I have gone through. In fine, God has given me the grace to arrive at the end of that loose career. But I observe that you are curious to have the history of my adventures, I consent to it. I should, however, have rather delayed giving you that satisfaction, till you was upon your departure for France. For I am sensible that you will despise me when you come to know the bottom of my heart. No matter, I chuse rather to mortify my self-love upon this occasion than to disoblige you.

MY NAME is Don Sebastian de Xuarez; my family has nothing but its character of probity to distinguish it, and my ancestors were all traders to the Indies.

My father not having the foolish ambition of elevating himself above his rank, began commerce with a large capital, which his great capacity, his assiduous endeavours, and good luck soon raised to an immense sum. In short, he became in a few years one of the richest traders in Europe. Some misfortunes intervening by the villainy of clerks, and the negligence of correspondents, he preferred the pleasure of enjoying what he had

had already acquired, to the care of getting more, and therefore retired to Madrid, with a view to live quiet and peaceably there. He happened to fall in love with Dona Leonora, a mean Artisan's daughter. My father was quite indifferent about the low fortune of the beautiful Leonora's parents. He was rich enough to make them all happy without discommoding himself. He was under no uneasiness on account of so mean an alliance, being persuaded that happiness alone makes the difference betwixt the rich merchant and poor artisan, and that they are every other way upon an equal footing, since the pains they both take for the public utility is the foundation of their fortune. You see by this, Sir, that if we Spaniards have more vanity than the French, at least we have sometimes this advantage over them, that our vanity is considerate, and may be corrected by Reason.

My father married the fair Leonora, and lived with her near fifteen years, which scarce appeared to be one day, so much love they had for one another. In fine, I came into the world at a time when it was thought my mother would never have any children. My extraordinary birth made my parents, and particularly my mother, extremely fond of me. She loved me to the hour of death as much as my father and more than herself.

I was

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I was unfortunate enough to perceive the ascendant I had over her; and this discovery made me not only intractable, but also gave me a contempt of education.

I was born with some external and internal advantages, and I soon became proud of them, imagining they would be very useful to me in the world, where I wanted greatly to make my appearance at an age in which I could scarce form a tolerable idea of it.

I absolutely neglected every thing that might be necessary for me to acquire. The Agreeable was my only study, and in a little time I became what we call a professed Musician and Dancer. I paid people very dear for coming to tell me every day that I was a Nonfuch. I was intoxicated with praises, and by hearing them constantly sounded in my ears I believed that I well deserved them. Self-love, which every thing augmented, made me conclude that my panegyrists spoke according to their real sentiments.

I was by chance supportable, by artifice agreeable, by habit affected, and by constitution petulant. Scarce had the word Love presented any distant idea to my mind, when I imagined that I was thoroughly acquainted with it. I had as yet no pleasure in reading that sort of books which corrupt the morals of youth, because I did not understand them.

I wanted

I wanted to be my own school-master, and as I was young, rich, and unconfined, opportunities were not wanting.

I gave myself up to the noisy and easy commerce of those complaisant women who make a trade of gallantry, and who swarm in all the corners of Madrid. Drove along by this whirlwind, I swam for some time in a torrent of voluptuous delights. At length my impaired health put a stop to my fiery intemperance. I experienced all the evils which are the shameful consequences of immoderate pleasure, and I was made acquainted with remorse, at an age when I scarce ought to have known the name of crime.

The time of my repentance was at last finished. I promised to myself to become another man, and I made it my business to find opportunities of breaking my promise. By the dint of money I debauched three of my mother's waiting-maids, whom she dismissed one after another so soon as she discovered their correspondence with me. My father was informed, I do not know how, of my bad conduct, he brought me to short allowance, that is to say, he discontinued giving me money. My first resource was selling some trinkets, thereafter I stole some of my mother's diamonds, who perceived my

my theft but took no notice of it. In fine, I took up upon credit, at different times, to the value of a hundred thousand crowns in stuffs, from a merchant, upon condition that I should pay a hundred livres for what was only worth fifty. An old Alcade, who concealed the trade of Usurer under the cloak of magistracy, gave me in cash about half the value of my merchandise, so that I ran a hundred thousand crowns in debt for about eighty thousand livres that I really received.

My disorders came all at last to my father's knowledge, who, for fear of making my mother uneasy, spoke not a word of them. But he resolved, and had her consent to it, that I should go and finish my studies in the famous university of Salamanca. He sought out for a man capable of conducting me in my behaviour as well as studies, and of regulating my hours of business and diversion. He found Don Sanchez, whose merit and probity he equally admired. He communicated his designs to him, begging he would take charge of me and be my governor while I was absent from Madrid, and likewise take upon him the authority and rights of a father, when the prudence of a friend would not do to reclaim me.

Don Sanchez had so great a regard for my father, he knew not how to refuse doing him
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the service which he required of him. He consented to every thing, and in a little time we set out with a considerable equipage, and a great deal of money, good bills of exchange and recommendations. My father and mother could not see me going from them without a deep concern. We mingled our tears, but the Pleasure of travelling dried up mine, Reason comforted my parents, and by degrees Habit reconciled us to absence.

Don Sanchez had been fully instructed by my father of the exactness with which he was to inspect into my conduct. He knew all that I had done at Madrid, though I had endeavoured to conceal it as much as is possible for a young Libertine. He mentioned not a word of all this, he even gave me a great deal of liberty, to see what use I would make of it, and soon became acquainted with my inclinations.

One evening we arrived pretty late at an inn. The landlord was a rich old fellow, who had married, about eight days before, a girl of sixteen, against her will, as well as a settled inclination for an agreeable lover almost of her own age. This injured female had no regard for the old man her husband, and took all occasions to mortify him. Our arrival furnished one. She told us her melancholy story in his presence, loading him with inju-

rious reproaches. I found her charming ; a favourable opportunity offered for telling her so ; she listened, we soon made up a bargain, and when Don Sanchez was asleep I slipped out of my chamber, and went to pass the night with my beautiful landlady, who stole from her husband to come and find me in a barn, the place she had appointed for our rendezvous.

We were both too agreeably employed to reckon the hours we passed together. Day appeared. A thresher who usually wrought there, arrived, and hearing some noise, ran to his master's chamber, awaked him, and told him that there were certainly thieves concealed in the barn. The landlord came armed, and perceiving his wife locked in my arms, the sight made him furious, and he seemed determined to poignard me. Don Sanchez's chamber being pretty near the place, he was awaked by our cries, and distinguishing my voice, came directly to my assistance. The combat was obstinate. I fought like one desperate, and having at length wrested the dagger out of the landlord's hand, I stabbed him twice, and he fell dead at my feet.

With a pretty large sum of money the thresher was made easy ; he promised to say nothing, and we immediately decamped, leaving the young widow more vexed with
the

the embarras in which this affair put her, than with the death of her husband. I was informed, above fifteen years after, that the thresh-er, who found her to his taste, had threatened to ruin her unless she married him ; to which she consented : that in six months her second husband died ; and that she had at last been joined to her first lover, with whom she lived in harmony when she told me the sequel of her adventures.

I was happy enough to escape the punishment due to my crime. It is thus the guilty are often preserved when they are rich, and the poor only suffer. On our arrival at Salamanca, we reposed for some days ; during which Don Sanchez took an opportunity of representing the enormity of my crime. Absence and impunity had lessened it in my eyes, so that his remonstrances seemed to me to be quite misplaced. Instead of inspiring me with sentiments of honour, they only provoked me, and made me look upon him as an insupportable Pedagogue.

We made visits to some friends of my father who lived at Salamanca, and were every where well received. One of them had a young and lovely daughter. His house pleased me, and I resolved to be no stranger in it. Don Sanchez guessed at the motive, and put a stop to my project, which I noted down as a new disobligation.

In

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In the mean time I was entered in a college of this famous university, to begin my studies. Don Sanchez was a man of great capacity. My father, who knew the talents for education, had ground to hope for great advantages to me. But he had to do with a child (for I was but fifteen then) whose giddy rakish humour, and dissolute manners, rendered useless both the prudence of my father, and the indefatigable care of Don Sanchez.

Some natural dispositions, rather than any good-will, rendered the beginning of my studies very brilliant. Don Sanchez gave himself all imaginable pains in the business of my education. He was so much master of the art of screening the toil of study under the shadow of agreeable instruction, that what I looked upon at first as an intollerable punishment, became an amusement. We were then content with one another, and by this time my desires were in all respects conformable to the taste of Don Sanchez, that is to say, to the laws of that amiable Wisdom which animates pleasures, by prescribing their just bounds, without ever destroying them. So soon as he perceived it he gave me all sort of good usage and encouragement, and there arose between us a contention of care and complaisance on his part, and application on mine; of which the whole advantage redounded

ed to me. In short, it was difficult to determine to whom the honour of my success was to be ascribed. Every body wrote to my father, all the letters were filled with encomiums of me, and all the answers notified presents sent me. His liberalities augmented my ardour for learning; by that he attained his aim, and we were all perfectly pleased.

I studied with so much facility, that no young man was ever known at Salamanca to make such a progress in so short a time. I may say it now without being taxed with vanity. The fruit which I have reaped from the knowledge that I have acquired in my youth, humbles but too much my self-love; this is what you will soon agree to. A young plant, carefully cultivated, grows, and is embellished from day to day. Provided it be guarded against the malignant influences of the air, it soon becomes the admiration of those who see it, and the pleasure of the person who cultivated it. But if he should desist from taking proper care of it, the least wind lays it level with the ground, the sun burns it, cold seizes it and destroys the vital sap. It is with youth as with a flower; however excellent the education may be, the least interruption ruins all. A young man easily forgets the best principles, because he is not sensible of their solidity. His heart becomes cor-

rupted, the impetuosity of passions makes him mad, and opportunities involve him in the hurricane of libertinism, without a possibility of his perceiving the danger to which he is exposed.

This was my case, Sir ; I happened to have the misfortune of Don Sanchez falling sick, who was for three months confined to his bed. I passed the first days in affliction, for fear of losing a man whose attentions had rendered him dear to me. Thereafter I went to unbend my mind, by a little recreation, of the fatigue of a close application, with which I had for a considerable time pursued my studies; and this repose soon conducted me gradually to a neglect of the most essential duties. I came at last to take pleasure in amusements, and even to think of nothing else. I gave into Gaming without reserve ; novelty gave me a relish to it, and my taste was augmented by the complaisance and civilities of those who were my gaming companions. Could I be otherwise than well received of gamesters, since I had a great deal of money and very little knowledge ? Don Sanchez perceived the disorder that reigned in all my actions ; he chid me pretty sharply, but to no purpose. He even threatened to write to my father, but I did not believe him capable of that, and my thoughts were
only

only taken up with reaping the advantage of the end of this distemper, as I had done in the beginning of it. The nearer I thought him to a perfect recovery, the more precious the moments appeared to me. In short, I gave headlong into all the disorders of which a young man full of money is capable, and whom nothing can keep within the bounds of duty. At length Don Sanchez recovered his health. He made me pay, by a most severe confinement, the abuse I had made of my liberty. Change of life brings no change in the inclinations. I sighed long after the same independence, and sought in vain to procure it.

Mad to be thus tied down, I was ungrateful enough to despise Don Sanchez, even to hate him, and impudent enough to tell him so. He was of a soft temper, he concealed the grief which I gave him, and did not seem to resent it by any change in his manner of acting. When the habit of obedience had taught me that I had to do with a man whom I would never be able to reduce with a high hand, I resolved to seduce him by soft means and flattery. I recommenced my studies, and did every thing he required of me with an appearance of sincerity, by which he was deceived; he even complimented me upon it, and loved me as much as before he fell sick.

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We had a little house near the College, where our whole domestics consisted of a cook-maid and a footman. Our cook was an old woman, but she had a very pretty daughter about eighteen, who being the only one I had occasion to see, appeared to me an Angel.

Her name was Brigitte. She often came and passed some days with her mother, which Don Sanchez suffered out of regard to the old woman with whom we were pretty well satisfied. I often conversed with Brigitte, and formed a sort of friendship with her, weak on her part but lively on mine. This friendship was soon converted into a commerce of toying and caressing, flowing on my side from the love I bore her, and which innocence and natural constitution made her suffer and even share in. The mother taking no notice of what passed, our familiarity augmented, and we were as much together as possible.

New cause of dissipation. Don Sanchez, whose bad state of health did not permit him to look strictly into my conduct, depended still upon the appearances of change which I had shewn. He was for some time puzzled what to think. He perceived very plainly that I did not mind my book, but he knew not to what my indolence was to be ascribed.

I was

I was always submissive to every thing he desired, always affectionate towards him, and scarce stirred out of the house.

One day he came to my chamber door, where he observed me stealing several kisses from Brigitte. He judged, by the little resistance she made, that she was accustomed to these demonstrations of my passion. He retired without our perceiving him, and sent for me a moment after. He made me a very sharp reprimand for my losing time, and concluded with telling me, that if he saw me speaking to Brigitte, he would take care that she should not set foot in the house.

He likewise catechised the mother of my Belle, who protested, to no purpose, that she was quite ignorant of my attachment to her daughter; he threatened to dismiss her if she did not watch Brigitte more carefully.

Difficulties have always augmented Love. Brigitte perceived that she loved me from the moment that she was forbid to see me. The dread of being sent a packing with her mother made her very much upon the reserve with me. But her passion appeared to me more lively and charming in the moments that we enjoyed alone and without fear of discovery. They were few, but very delicious. I had recourse, by my Belle's advice, to an affected indifference, which deceived our

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spies for some time ; but I was equally neglectful of my tasks, and Don Sanchez perceiving it, guessed what passed in my heart ; for which reason he resolved absolutely to deprive me of all opportunities of seeing Brigitte, and laid a strict command on her mother not to let her come near our house any more.

This good woman found the order harsh, and observing how much I was afflicted with the loss of my Mistress, judged that I was very much in love, and that it would not be a very difficult matter to make her daughter's fortune, by engaging me to marry her. With this view she seemed to pity my case. I proposed her bringing her daughter secretly to the house ; she had this complaisance sometimes, and I thought myself the happiest man in the world.

My footman, who was in love with Brigitte, discovered the mother's contrivances to bring her daughter and me together ; he informed Don Sanchez of it, who conducted himself so prudently and watched so carefully, that he surpris'd Brigitte one night in my chamber. His grief was visible in his looks, and, for the first time, I saw him angry. He said nothing to me ; but directly commanded the mother and daughter to be gone out of the house.

All

All those who happen to be caught in the fact, are confus'd and at a loss what to determine, which particularly happens to young people. I was quite out of countenance on the appearance of Don Sánchez, and let Brigitte go away without saying one word.

My footman took great care to publish the disgrace of our cook, who made her complaints to Don Sanchez. He blamed the footman's indiscretion, and turned him off too; nay more, he pitied the poor Brigitte, and after making the mother more sensible of the infamous part she had acted, and of the inequality of rank and fortune, that must for ever exclude her daughter from any pretensions to me, he gave her money to put the girl into a Convent.

I discovered this contrivance, which quite enraged me; and after beating my brain with a thousand projects, the one more extravagant than the other, I fixed at last on the desire of being revenged on the person who deprived me of all that I loved in the world. Don Sanchez treated me with more lenity than usual, endeavouring by that means to calm my displeasure, and waited till that was accomplished, before he attempted to make me sensible of my extravagance. His complaisance increased my hatred, every thing in him seemed to inspire me with horror, and

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it was no longer possible for me to moderate my rage. One day that my grief seemed to depress me more than ever, Don Sanchez, after embracing me with great marks of affection, exhorted me in the most earnest and moving manner possible, to get the better of a foolish passion. His advices made me quite outrageous. I started up, flew upon him, and with a knife, which I found by accident under my hand, gave him three mortal stabs; and this done, I directly left the house before any body appeared, or knew any thing of this barbarous action. I had no thoughts of Brigitte, who was the cause of my abominable crime, my thoughts were wholly taken up about making my escape, or, rather, I fled without knowing what I did.

Three leagues from Salamanca, I met with a young gentleman, who having finished his studies was returning to his family at Alcantara. He knew me again by having seen me at the College, though I was young and not so far advanced as he. He took the trouble, which appeared so remarkably in my countenance, to be the effect of some discontent which my masters had given me, and told me so: upon this I formed a story, which he believed, and I agreed to the proposal he made of our travelling together.

I found

I found at Alcantara a rich merchant who was making the tour of Spain, for what reason I could never learn, I was too young to be let into the secret. He took me along with him by way of a companion to his son near about my age ; and we went through many towns in which I saw so few things worthy of my curiosity that I have even forgot their names.

At last we arrived at Granada. This kingdom extends from Vera to Malaga ; the country is pleasant enough. We were told that while it was possessed by the Moors, it was populous, and furnished all sort of commodities. The rising grounds were covered with vines, and fruit-trees, the plains abounded with corn. The towns were filled with inhabitants and provisions ; whereas at present there are much fewer people, and the country produces very little. Thus Spanish indolence neglects the means of happiness, by not taking care to cultivate a country fertile in its soil and advantageously situated. This is what makes us less rich than other people, though we might be much more.

We embarked near Malaga, and landed on different coasts, of which I shall give you no description, because I saw nothing worth mentioning, nor did any thing interesting happen to me. After eleven months navigation

gation we dropt anchor at the mouth of the river Congo, near the coast of Guiney: the change of air, and the thirst we had suffered in the ship, gave distempers to the greatest part of the ship's crew, which obliged us to go and seek refreshments on shore, in some small Portuguese towns upon the banks of river.

I went often to take a walk in the morning in the neighbourhood of one of those towns, where the merchant whom I accompanied lodged. I had never seen but Madrid and Salamanca; I admired every thing, because every thing I beheld was unknown to me.

The trees, the plants, the birds, and even the stones and flints were the subject of my meditations. One day in particular I was so wrapt up in thought and reflection upon all these novelties, that I lost my way without knowing how I had lost it, nor how I should find it again. I walked the whole day, fatiguing myself, but did not arrive. Night surpris'd me, and I was forced to make the ground my bed, and the canopy of the Heavens my covering. In short, I fell asleep at the foot of a tree, where I only intended to rest a little, with a view thereafter to seek out for a better lodging.

The

The next day I travelled from day-break till noon, and at last found myself at the foot of a high mountain: I went to the top of it which was bare and uncultivated. From thence I discovered the town which I had left the day before. I remarked that to get at it, not above three leagues distant, my road was to take to the left. Charmed to find that I was not lost, and that I should see my companions again, which I more than once despaired of, concluding that my perishing in this manner was a just punishment of my crimes, I descended the mountain, and directed my course towards the town. In the way hunger pressed me so hard that I ventured on some fruit which I found couchant as it were upon the ground, without knowing whether it was proper to nourish, or to poison me. After this melancholy repast I continued walking, and at the close of day knew the place again which I had left in the morning, and though I had past the last night safely there, I resolved to seek out another place, and so went on a little farther, where I found a cavern into which I entered without any dread. I happened to cast my eyes on three little animals which I imagined to be wild cats, I carried them about two hundred paces to the place where I passed the night.

Next

Next morning at the break of day I pursued my journey, not forgetting my little scats, and about noon I arrived at the town, where they were charmed to see me, having concluded that I was either taken by the Negroes, or devoured by wild beasts. I related my adventure, they looked upon it as a prodigy, and told me that what I called cats were lion's whelps; that the mother probably was gone to seek after prey to feed them when I found them, and they could not conceive how the enraged lioness had not, by scent, discovered that the young ones were so near her, and come in the night time to tear me in pieces.

The Captain of the ship having finished his affairs, and judging that we were sufficiently refreshed and reposed, gave us notice that he was preparing to set sail. Accordingly we went to sea after eight days stay, but in bad weather which lasted twice twenty four hours. In fine, a violent tempest arose, which, after carrying away our masts and rigging, drove the ship upon a ridge of rocks where she was split to pieces.

The greatest part of the ship's company perished. I lost all, since I had the grief of seeing my patron die. His son, who loved me, would upon no account quit me. We endeavoured the best way we could to climb
up

up the rocks, and we were almost got at the top, when this poor young man's foot slipped, so that he was tossed from one rock's point to another, and his body was tore to pieces before he reached the sea, in which he would have met with a less violent death, though not less certain. It was impossible for me to give him the least assistance. His misfortune made such an impression upon me, that I had not strength to go higher. I therefore lay down where I was, and spent a night, of which the horrors still surpassed those of the night which followed the death of Don Sanchez. I found myself alone in a country, where it appeared never before man had been so unhappy as to be thrown, without provisions, without talents, without experience, and a heart tore to pieces by remorses of former crimes, and regrets of former happiness.

So soon as day appeared, I began again to climb, and being arrived at the summit of one of these highest rocks, I perceived a tolerable country, and some men in a plain not far from me. I passed the whole day in seeking out for a way to descend, at last I found one, and towards night I arrived quite spent with fatigue, hunger, and grief. Among these inhabitants I perceived a Frenchman whom I had seen in our ship. He was an old mariner
who

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who had been often in those seas, and who being acquainted with this island, had found a road that had led him to the habitation of these Islanders. He embraced me and exhorted me to take courage. Some refreshment was brought me, and these good people, after engaging me to take some nourishment, conducted me into a cottage, where they gave me one of the best beds they had, which was a sort of couch made of sticks joined at some distance the one from the other, covered with branches with the leaves still on them. I was not at that time full eighteen, I saw myself well received by these hospitable people, and free from the fear of death, so that I slept soundly. When I awaked the old Frenchman came to see me, and informed me that these poor people had been cast away there by a violent storm, and that a considerable number of them having escaped being drowned, they had formed a sort of colony. That the island abounded with a kind of goats, which they hunted ; that the bodies of those creatures served them for nourishment, and the skins they sold to passengers who brought them corn and other provisions.

I remained four years among them. I went a hunting with them, and had my exact share of what the skins produced. About this time I lost my companion the old Frenchman,

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man, who was carried off by a malignant fever in eight days. The whole colony assembled to deliberate upon his succession, and it was unanimously decided that his inheritance belonged to me as a recompence for the care I had taken of him. His part and mine making a pretty considerable sum, this little treasure gave me a desire of seeing once more my native country. I communicated my design, which met with no opposition, so that I embarked in a short time after in an English ship that came to water and to buy skins in our island.

The End of the Fourth PART.

PART

P A R T V.

THE bad weather obliged us to put into a neighbouring island, where a French ship was arrived, with a cargo of women, whom they had brought for wives to the inhabitants. The man, in whose house I lodged, had married one, young and tollerably handsome, who had the art of pleasing à-la-mode de France. This female made me understand, by the language of her eyes, and other little coquetish arts, that she thought my person agreeable, and that I was much fitter for her purpose than an old worn-out husband, who had passed his whole life in planting tobacco. As I had been four years deprived of the sight and conversation of women, the charms of this girl appeared to me to exceed the imaginary perfections of the most finished Venus. Her behaviour and fondness of me called back the idea of pleasures, which were the more seductive, as I had long been deprived of them. I lost no opportunity of being blessed with the company of my lovely landlady, but our happiness soon abandoned us, and my landlord became jealous: I appeared so odious and dangerous in his eyes, that he stuck as close

close to his wife as her shadow. Obstacles served only to excite our endeavours to deceive him; but, unfortunately, when we flattered ourselves with golden opportunities, cross and unforeseen obstacles stepped between us and happiness. In fine, the willing Fair proposed to follow me to the world's end, if I loved her enough to carry her off from her old drone. I had money, I bought a canoe, I engaged three men to work it, and gave notice to my Belle that I was ready to depart. I waited some days for the answer, but she was watched so narrowly, it was impossible for her to make her escape, or even to let me know her embarrass. In the mean time a Negro-woman, whom I had gained, soliciting her daily upon my account, she wrote an anonymous letter to the Governor, informing his Excellency that her husband was the author of the robbery committed in his house some months before; and this letter was delivered in such manner that it could not be known from whence it came.

Upon this information the Governor ordered my landlord to be taken up, and provisionally thrown into a dungeon; his wife acted the disconsolate woman to admiration, wept bitterly, made all the neighbourhood ring with her cries, and the very next night she and I took our departure.

We

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We landed at another island sixty leagues from thence, where we lived near a year the better friends that we were not married. Her husband, after remaining some time in prison, underwent an examination, but as he flatly denied the charge, was remanded back to his gloomy cell, where he did not long remain when two thieves were taken up, who confessed the robbery at the Governor's the preceding year, without accusing any of the inhabitants as accomplices; they were hanged, and my landlord set at liberty. His first care was to enquire after his wife; he learned, I do not know how, where she was, and lost no time in coming to find her; as I was beginning to be tired with her person, as well as the expence of keeping her, Madam was restored to her true owner, without any difficulty on my part, and graciously received by him, who faithfully promised to use her well, and I did not tell him that she had done him the favour of procuring him a dungeon for a six months habitation.

About a month after I engaged in a Corsair going upon a cruise off some Spanish ports: I wanted to replace what I had been out of pocket with my beautiful Islander, but as we were sailing along the coast of Carthage, we were attacked and taken by a ship of war. The whole ship's company were made prisoners,

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soners, and directly carried to Carthagena, where we were employed in carrying materials to rebuild a fort that was ruinous.

After having suffered all the evils attached to captivity, I resolved to make my escape; but I had nothing; my indigence made me throw my eyes upon a little fleet of barks in the harbour, which were returned from the pearl-fishing. I viewed them all at a distance, and I was persuaded that with a little resolution one of them might be carried off: I considered with myself what means would be most proper to secure so good a prize; in short, finding it impracticable to execute such a design alone, I communicated it to four of my comrades, who relished my proposal, and after swearing to one another inviolable fidelity, it was determined, in our little council, that we should seize on the largest bark, in which they usually put the greatest part of the pearls.

Every evening we were put into a dungeon under ground. We waited some days, until chance, or perhaps, the whim of our keepers, brought us into one above ground, and close by the harbour. In fine, one night that we judged very dark, because the day had been gloomy, we perceived a hole in the wall, which we easily enlarged, so that three of us got out, but the fourth being corpulent could not pass; however,

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however, by our working hard on the outside, in danger every minute of a discovery, we at last got him out. We directly threw ourselves into a canoe, which we had provided before hand, and went to the large bark which was guarded only by seven men, who were all massacred and thrown into the sea before they were fully awake. In an instant we made sail, and did not stop till three days after in a little creek of the Isle Espagnole, where having visited our bark, we found in it to the value of a hundred and fifty thousand piasters in pearls, which we divided equally among us.

I was overjoyed when I found myself in a condition to return to my native country. I embarked with one of my comrades in an English vessel, which, after landing some passengers in several islands, was to proceed directly for Lisbon. We steered our course at first for St. Domingo, and when we were near the latitude of that island, fell in with an Ostend Privateer, who gave us chase for some hours, came up with us in the evening, and with the first broad-side our main-mast came by the board, and our ship received three shots betwixt wind and water. In this condition we chose rather to yield than to allow ourselves to be sunk. We were all brought on board the Privateer as well as our merchandise. My companion and I had the grief of seeing
ourselves

ourselves stripped of our little fortune, and as wretched as we had been at Carthage.

Admire the decrees of Providence, which does not always permit the guilty to enjoy the fruits of their crimes. We had carried off these pearls from people who had been at great expence and trouble in fishing them. A Pirate took them from us and loaded us with chains; these riches as little belonged to him as us; it is thus crimes are multiplied in the world, and that he who reaps is seldom the same who had sown.

We continued cruising for six months without stopping, but to water in islands almost desert. Our Captain was talking of wintering in some harbour, when we fell in with a certain Algerine Corsair, in the height of Cape Finister, who treated the Ostender in the same manner he had done us six months before: we were all made slaves and carried to Algiers. I was sold to a Turk of Anarnople, who had come to settle some affairs in that part of Barbary. This Musulman was good-natured, and an honest man; I endeavoured to please him, and succeeded; he was satisfied with my zeal, and gave me the command of all his other slaves. Ibrahim (the name of my patron) had a daughter extremely beautiful, called Irene; she neither understood French nor Spanish, and I could

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not speak a word of her language; this prevented our discoursing together when I had occasion to see her, which frequently happened; but the language of the eyes is universal. Irene spoke in that way, and I answered her, so that we soon discovered our mutual passion for one another. She walked in the gardens at the hours I was there. When I passed under her window, she let something drop that I might bring it to her, and by this means had an opportunity of shewing herself. I enjoyed this pleasure for four months, during which I acquired so much of the Turkish language as to be able to speak it indifferently, and I promised myself the pleasure of agreeably surprising Irene the first opportunity, which soon happened. One day my patron ordered me to carry some flowers to his daughter. I flew, and, in presenting them, made a compliment so passionate, that it had not common sense: I spoke of love, and in the Turkish language; she understood me, and the confusion I was under, gave her more pleasure than the most agreeable things I could have told her: we were alone, she confessed that she had for a considerable time loved me, and added, that if I would turn Turk, I could obtain her of her father, who loved the Europeans: I rejected her proposal, but she was so beautiful that I begged she would permit me to love her.

Ibrahim had his daughter carefully guarded by two women and several eunuchs; he even had the key of her bed-room brought to him every evening; but Irene loved me, she had found means to put this key into my hands; I got one made of the same form, which gave me access to pass many delicious nights with her.

One evening Ibrahim having remained late in the garden, perceived one going before him, and by the light of the moon knew me; he remarked that I went into that part of the house where his daughter had her apartment, he followed me at a distance, and used such precautions, that he entered Irene's chamber a quarter of an hour after me, without our hearing the least noise.

Two lights that served to illuminate our pleasures, discovered my crime: he was a father, he found me in his daughter's bed, could he be otherwise than desperately enraged? He had already drawn his dagger to stab us both, and was going to begin with his daughter: alas! it was killing me in my better half, since I was her lover: seizing his arm I stopt the deadly weapon from being plunged in Irene's breast. This unfortunate father having thrown his eyes on the victims that he intended to sacrifice to his fury, our tears disarmed him, and he only told me these few words going out of the chamber:

Deserve

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Irene

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Irene by taking the Turban, and I will give her to thee. I promised my Belle that I would turn Turk. What will not a passionate lover promise? Assurances of happiness so near at hand raised her to the highest pitch of joy, and I left her more amorous than ever.

Yes, Sir, I confess it, I formed the monstrous design of abandoning God for one of his creatures. What do I say? I executed this design as much as was in my power. The next day Ibrahim sent for me, and gave me a letter to a Musti, a friend of his, and dispatched me with it without speaking one word: this silence was what might have intimidated me, but so much goodness was visible in his looks, that I was under no apprehension of his having changed his mind.

The Musti kept me at his house near a month, during which my occupation was to learn the religion of the grand Prophet. The more I was absent from Irene, the more I loved her: I received the Musti's lessons with so great application, that he judged I was as well instructed in the religion as is necessary for a good Mussulman; that is to say, a man who professes a law he knows nothing of.

I returned to my patron's with a letter from this Mahometan Prelat. Ibrahim appeared to be pleased that I was qualified to put on the Turban; he had the complaisance to shew me
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the letter, and the ceremony was to be performed three days after: he conducted me himself to his daughter's apartment, and presented me to her in quality of husband: she received me with so much pleasure, that she could neither find words to answer her father nor me, but her silence equally satisfied u both. We all three tasted that joy which always follows great troubles, when word was brought that one wanted to speak with Ibrahim. He went out, ordering me to follow him. O Heavens! what visit were we going to receive: the Sultan sent one of his eunuchs with four mutes to strangle my dear patron. He read the letter with tranquillity, kissed it respectfully, and after a short prayer bid me a last farewell, putting himself the fatal string about his neck, and the mutes finished the operation in a moment.

When a subject among the Turks puts the Sovereign under a necessity of taking away his life in this manner, the custom is that the Prince inherits all that he possesses, and even his children are often made slaves: this last idea came into my mind, and made me tremble for Irene: the moments were precious; I flew to her chamber, and informed her of our misfortune; she fainted away in my arms. I did all that was in my power to call her back to life, and at length succeeded; one of her

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women assisted me to persuade her to fly, and we agreed to get to Europe. I went out to prepare things for the execution of this project, the success whereof depended entirely upon expedition. I hired a bark almost at the door of our house; when night came on I carried Irene and her slave on board, and we directly put to sea. Irene was loaded with jewels and what else she had found that was precious in her father's house, which was enough to make a handsome settlement in Europe. We rowed the whole night, and the rising sun promised us a fine day; but we soon perceived a bark full of Turks pursuing us. We redoubled our efforts with the oars, in order to gain a little island from which we were but at a small distance. But as the Turks were perceptibly gaining on us, and were much superior to us in force, I did not think it was proper to wait for them in our bark. I therefore took Irene in my arms with an intention to put her into the boat, and get to land before the Turks could come up with us; but in going over the side, my foot slipped, we both fell into the sea, and my dear Irene, by the weight of the jewels and gold that she had about her, immediately sunk to the bottom: alas! I saw her perish, and did not perish with her, the love of life made me struggle to preserve it. My people threw me a
piece

piece of wood, by means whereof I got to the boat, and we were soon, by force of oars, at a good distance from both our own bark and from that of the Turks, and after being greatly tossed, the wind having shifted, we reached a small island, where we passed the night close by the sea-side.

Next morning our boat was no more to be seen; this loss afflicted us greatly, and after many fruitless lamentations, I advanced in the island, seeking death or some ease to my distress: I happened to meet with some Frenchmen who were shooting a sort of partridge that is found in this island. My Turkish habit frightened them, they got together and presented their pieces at me, taking me for a Barbary Rover, who had come to make slaves of them: I threw myself on my knees and begged for quarter; upon which they made me approach nearer. I recounted all that had happened; they were moved with my misfortunes, and promised to give me all the assistance in their power.

I returned directly to notify this good news to my companions, but I only found in a condition to follow me the sailor who had helped me to row the boat. A slave of Irene's, who had come with us, was expiring with grief and fatigue. The Frenchmen did all they could to save her life, but to no pur-

pose, for she died in our arms. We buried her in the sand, and the sailor and I followed the Frenchmen, who told us that their ship was at anchor on the south-side of the island, where they had landed to refresh themselves, and had been in it five days. I was presented to the commander, who was mighty civil. He was curious to know my story, and when it was ended, he blamed me much for my weakness in consenting to renounce the Christian Religion and embrace the Turkish. He spoke upon this subject such moving things, that I could not stop my tears. We left the island two days after, and this generous captain landed me on the coast of Spain, with a young Nobleman who came to see the court of Madrid, and who was so good as to bring me along with him ; I there learned that my parents had been dead several years, that hearing no news of me for a long time, they had disposed of their whole estate in favour of the Count de Fuentes's son, and that this young Nobleman, by the death of his father, was actually in possession of it. I went to see him, and made myself known. He appeared to be charmed that my estate was preserved, and promised to put me in possession of it without loss of time.

Heaven, that reserved for me what is preferable to all worldly riches, inspired me with the
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the design of throwing myself into this convent, where I have lived about thirty years, and where I hope to die in the grace of God, and repentance of my faults.

I judged by the narration of Father Sebastian's adventures, that he was one of those men who have not the happiness to be born with innate principles of honesty, and whose probity is the effect of circumstances and of reflections. However penitent he might be for his crimes, I could not help conceiving for him a good part of the contempt with which he was apprehensive of inspiring me. I have a peculiar way of thinking about those men who pretend to have forsaken the extravagancies of youth. I ascribe their reformation to the want of money, or of health, and I wait till they are dead to judge of the sincerity of their conversion.

I had contracted a friendship with a man at Madrid, attached to the Ministry of the Spanish Court. I had told him my story, and he had foretold that my letter to the Minister, to whom I had returned the *Lettre de Cachet* to take me into custody, would do more for me than all my friends joined together.

Is it possible, said he, that a stranger must let you know the merit of this great man? He is of an incredible penetra-

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tion, nothing escapes him, and he reflects upon the most trivial circumstances. He labours with as much pleasure and facility as others amuse themselves, and amuses himself with more ease and taste. In his closet he is an excellent Minister, at Court he is an amiable Grandee, he is every where a man of honour, a good friend, the protector of the unfortunate, and the delight of society. Since you have the happiness to be known to him, you ought to be persuaded that it is enough for him to know that you are depressed by disasters that you have not deserved, to make it his business to oblige you, and you do him injury not to depend upon his protection.

The prediction was soon verified. In fine, after having passed eighteen months at Madrid, and undergone in it all the displeasures attached to banishment, I received two letters from France, which advised me that my affair with Javotte's parents was terminated to my advantage, without other explication; and that I might return to Paris. One of these letters was from Madam de Vilmane, and the other from the Minister to whom I had applied.

I had then only considered that step as a means of repairing the want of respect, which I had been guilty of, in bringing along with
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me an order of the Sovereign. So essential a proof of the goodness of this Minister stamp'd on my heart the deepest impression of respect and gratitude.

Two days were sufficient to make the necessary preparations for my departure. I therefore left Madrid the third day in the morning; from that moment I forgot all my misfortunes, and nothing ran in my head but agreeable ideas. What pleasures were waiting my arrival in France! I was going to throw myself at the feet of a worthy protector, whose generosity affected me the more that I was not worthy of it. I was going to see and thank Madam de Vilmane, for all the pains she had taken to soften my sufferings, and to end them. I was going to see once more my dear Helena, to enjoy the pleasure of making her forget, in the peaceful bosom of an easy life, all the hardships she had been expos'd to in Spain. In short, I was going to see once more my country, my friends, my house, my domestics, to be reinstalled in my habitation, and to live in it as formerly, with this difference that I should be more sensible of the pleasures of Paris, as I had been deprived of them for a considerable time. The least thing that I recalled to memory presented a thousand charms to my imagination. In fine, the pleasure which my

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return would give to my friends, and that which I was going to procure to those of my domestics who had accompanied me in my banishment; by bringing them back to their native country and families, were subjects of gladness and exalted joy.

I never saw a route so agreeable as that from Madrid to Paris appeared to me upon my return. The roads were delicious walks, and the inns palaces, where they served exquisite repasts. Only upon the articles of posting I had no *deceptio visus*, the horses did not correspond with my impatience, I looked upon them, with justice, as the misery of travellers.

I had no thoughts now of visiting the Intendant of Orleans, nor a great many of my friends who ought to be at their country seats about that time, and whose houses lay in my way to Paris, from which, when I was about twenty leagues distant, my impatience rose to such a height, that I put one of my footmen into my chaise, and took his boots and post-horse, and drove with full speed, followed by my other footman.

I had not given myself time to write to Madam de Vilmane, nor to give notice to the servants in my house to get things in order for my reception, so that I found every thing there in great disorder. My porter was
dead

dead during my absence, and he whom Madam de Vilmane had put in his place, not knowing me, was a little rough. However, in case it should turn out so as that I should really happen to be his master, he offered me a chair in his lodge, where I waited till the keys were sent for to Madam de Vilmane's, that I might get into my apartment; but that Lady was at Passy with my daughter, who was drinking the waters there. The person who had my keys in charge being out of the way, I was obliged to remain where I was, as I could not think of going to Passy in my vest and boots.

This mighty wife and self-conceited porter, as all porters in the world are, advised me, in his profound penetration, to go and equip myself at the Friperie*. I relished this advice, he went and got me a hackney coach, in which I drove, booted as I was, to a Fripier, or Salesman, who, in less than an hour, equipped me from head to foot. From thence I went to Passy, and was conducted to Madam de Vilmane's apartment. She was sitting near a window with a book in her hand. She got up when the footman named me. What charming interview! The long time that we had been without seeing one another, inspir-

* A street in Paris where they sell old clothes.

ing me with sentiments too rapturous to be confined within the limits of the ceremonial, I embraced her with all the transports of an excessive tenderness, but without being able to pronounce one single word. She only spoke to me in sighs and in some tender tears, which the joy of seeing me again drew from her fair eyes. We remained a full quarter of an hour in this condition, entirely deprived of the use of our tongues. In fine, by a violent effort she broke silence, in asking a great many questions about my health, and reproaches for not having given her notice of my arrival.

Ah! Madam, answered I with vivacity, can one defer, for a moment, the pleasure of seeing you again? She foresaw that I was going to launch out into lovers rhapsodies, and got up to conduct me to my daughter. I enjoyed, in seeing her, a pleasure as lively, though of a different kind. But this pleasure was interrupted by the visible languor that I observed in her countenance. What is the

matter with you, dear Helena, said I? is it solitude and confinement that alters your health? She only answered with embracing me. I perceived that she shed tears, which affected me greatly, because I saw that she endeavoured to restrain them. I asked her a second time about her health, and I got no other answer, which made me desist, because

cause I saw that I greatly perplexed her. She looked at me with a joy so expressive, that I enjoyed all the pleasures of true paternal affection; I took her several times in my arms and gave her a thousand kisses. One must be a father to form an idea of my pleasure at that time. We went all three to Dona Juanna's. She turned pale as death upon seeing me arrive without her son. I did not give her time to be really alarmed. I told her that I was come before to notify his arrival; that he was in perfect good health, giving this lovely child the praises that he really deserved. In effect, his disposition was extremely happy. Nature had planted in him the seed of all the fine qualities, which might in the sequel be cultivated by Education. She thanked me for the care I had taken of him with an effusion of heart which greatly affected us. In fine, this tender mother had the pleasure of seeing her dear son. We all supped together, after which the young man and I were conducted to an apartment in the neighbourhood, that happened to be vacant, where we reposed ourselves, being much fatigued with our long journey.

The pleasure of thinking that I was at length in my native country, with Madam de Vilmane, Helena, and all my friends, banished sleep from my eyes; but at last my
senses

senses were wrapt up in a soft and delicious slumber, my imagination, heated with so many different pleasures, wandered in a maze of ideal felicities, one more agreeable than another, and so permanent, that when I opened my eyes next morning they fled not away.

Madam de Vilmane was for my going directly to thank the Minister, whose goodness alone had brought me back to France, and with that view we set out together for Versailles. On the road she told me how much I was obliged to him for all the trouble he had taken to get to the bottom of so intricate an affair, of which the appearances were against me.

Satisfied with the pleasure of having served me, he had condemned to silence the particulars of his generous procedure, but the detail of it becomes indispensably necessary here, which forces me to disobey the commands of so worthy a friend. This flattering title, I hope, will be permitted me to give to this truly great man, whom my misfortunes alone had engaged to descend even to one in my low sphere, and whose repeated favours have at length elevated me even to him, since they have made me lose sight of his rank, and attached me only to his person.

Let it be remembered that my flight was a step absolutely necessary; that chance had
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thrown into my hands the King's order for arresting ; me and that I left Paris two hours after I was in possession of it, leaving Futil prisoner in his closet with the Abbé Ramy.

The bold manner in which I appeared in the closet, with the indignation that shewed itself in my looks, had so confounded them that they remained after I was gone a full quarter of an hour, without attempting to get out. At length Futil wanting to open the door, found it locked ; he made a noise, but the servants being gone to his wife's antichamber, it was not heard by them. The hour of supper being come, Madam Futil sent to ask her husband if it should be served ; the servant could have no access to him. There was no double key to this door, so that they were obliged to send for a locksmith, who declared he had no picker for so strong a lock. In short, after long deliberation, it was determined that the prisoners must come out at the window. Futil thought it was an affront to his magisterial gravity to be seen on a ladder, at the peril of falling from a very high first floor into the court, and therefore positively refused to procure his liberty by that means. It was at last determined that the locksmith should come in at the window, which he accordingly did, and by taking off the lock set them at liberty. All the company

ny joined to ask questions about an event so singular. Futil and the Abbé gave indistinct answers, so that no body knew what had passed ; only, as I had disappeared, it was suspected I had some concern in this affair ; this occasioned more curiosity, and more questions, but all to no purpose. At length the whole company sat down to supper, during which Futil made a very poor figure, and Madam did the honours in a very aukward constrained manner, which made the company judge she was interested in the event of the lock. The supper being good, and the conversation languid, the guests eat heartily, and retired early. Futil was no sooner at liberty than he wrote a letter to the Exempt, informing him of what had happened ; but he was gone to the country, and did not return till next day in the evening. Upon reading the letter he ran to my house with an intention to arrest me, by virtue of the order, of which I was myself the bearer. He was sadly vexed not to find me, but said nothing, and retired without noise. A spy, or setter, whom he had placed, got account in the neighbourhood that my horses had carried me some leagues out of town, and had returned in the afternoon. Another spy called for my postillion, and having engaged him to go with him to the tavern, asked him a great many questions

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questions about me. After a hearty dose of the best wine, which my fellow greedily guzzled down, he told the spy, as a grand secret, that he had conducted me to Ecouan, on the road to Calais, where I intended to embark for England. The Exempt swallowed the bait, took post for Calais directly, and upon his arrival was informed that an hour before a vessel had sailed for Dover, in which there were several Frenchmen going for London. This news fretted him much, he returned to Paris, where he positively asserted that I was gone for England. The Abbé Ramy, who was the author of this unhappy affair, went to communicate the news to M***, to whom Javotte's father was coachman. He promised to push the process for his domestic, he was rich, and his Attorney did not fail to assure him of success.

Informations were taken against me. I was charged by the deposition of the Abbé Ramy, the Prioress of the Convent, and even by my domestics, who could not help saying that they had seen living at my house a young girl whose name they did not know. The depositions of these last, however cautious, charged me, since it might be concluded from my having a young girl in my house, that it was Javotte, and that I knew where she was. To this was joined a new incident, viz. the pretended

pretended father whom my footman had suborned to demand Javotte in the Convent. This poor man, the cause and the victim, was informed against by one of his friends, to whom he had communicated this story as a frolic. He was taken up, and examined, and the Priors produced the certificate which he had signed: he accused my servant, who was thereupon summoned, but, happily for him, he was with me at Bayonne.

My whole estate was seized a little after, and I was soon to be judged with the utmost rigour, when I wrote to Court sending back the Lettre de Cachet to the Minister who had signed it. He found in the manner I set forth my misfortunes an air of truth with which he was struck, and the next day recounted my story at table in a house where he supped with Madam de Vilmane. She assured him that she knew me; upon which he signified that he would be glad to serve me, and the very next day gave orders that diligent search should be made to find Javotte, but his endeavours were fruitless. He sent for the Abbé, to whom he spoke very seriously; he let him see in how many different ways he had wronged me, and, surprised to find him so resolute, he employed remonstrances, intreaties, and even threats, to engage him to put an end to this affair, by informing where
Javotte

Javotte was to be found. The Abbé affirmed he knew nothing of the matter, and denied every thing laid to his charge.

Notwithstanding the goodness of this Minister, who had stopped judgment from being given, Madam de Vilmane despaired of ever extricating me out of this unlucky scrape. She proposed an agreement, that is to say, she wanted that Javotte's parents should desist from the accusation they had entered against me, for a certain sum. But my secret enemies had no occasion for money. The offers were pushed to 20,000 livres. This Lady was ready to augment them, when the Minister sent her word that he had found Javotte, and had ordered her to be conducted to the Convent of ****; she had been found at her father's house, shut up in a chamber, and strictly guarded by her mother.

From that instant my affair put on another face. My Attorney made a great noise; demanded reparation of honour, damages, and interests, and other provisions of justice, according to the practice of triumphing pleaders. I obtained all I asked. Javotte's father was condemned, as having sued me wrongfully, being convicted of keeping his daughter shut up in his own house, that he might, with some appearance of truth, make the world believe I had carried her off. He was within
a hair's

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a hair's breadth of going to the Gallies for having imposed on the Court, but Madam de Vilmane obtained, that he should be only liable to pecuniary mulcts, which were considerable. All was exactly paid, and I was permitted to return to France.

We were just got to Versailles, when Madam de Vilmane finished the story of my affair. She presented me to my protector, who told me that none had so warmly espoused my cause as she, and that I had all the obligations in the world to her. He made me sensible, but in a very polite manner, that in bringing Javotte home to my house, I had lost all the merit of the good I intended her. He did not say one word of the services he had rendered me, and stopped my mouth when I was going to express my acknowledgements. He expressed a desire of seeing me now and then, and seemed to be diverted with the account of my Spanish expedition. I indemnified myself of the tiresome time I had passed there, by raising the French Court, and with justice, far above the Spanish, for magnificence and every thing agreeable.

He made me take notice of the captivity to which Javotte was reduced. I was touched with her misfortune, for it is in reality one for a pretty girl to be in a Convent against her will, and therefore I desired that she
might

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might be set at liberty, which was accordingly done a little time after. She had been the cause of too many evils I had undergone, to consent to see her ; I had even the cruelty not to give myself the trouble of knowing what would become of her. Revenge has charms even at the expence of Reason.

I returned to Paris, and found my house, which I took possession of again, a palace compared to that which I had so long, against my will, lived in at Madrid. I gave Helena her mother's apartment, which she came and saw, but could not remain in it, because the air of Passy was beginning to agree with her. As Madam de Vilmane and Dona Juanna resolved to remain with her, I was alone at Paris, and went every day to dine at Passy, from whence I only returned in the evening. I thus passed my time with the persons who were dearest to me, Madam de Vilmane and Helena.

The joy of being thus re-united was too perfect, and too well founded to occupy us but one day ; the duration of it only seemed to augment it, by furnishing us with a thousand occasions of mutually expressing it. I likewise saw my old friends, who flocked to congratulate me upon my return. They informed me of the news of the town, and I diverted my Ladies at Passy with what I picked up, who were extremely fond of hear-
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ing what passed at Paris : and this confirms the opinion, that it sufficeth to be retired out of the circle of high life, to be passionately fond of every thing that relates to it. I communicated to them, one day, an event as amusing to them, as it was grievous to the parties concerned.

A man of my acquaintance, named Lardan, born, as many others, something less than nothing, was promoted, by dint of labour and industry, to an honourable post, which brought him more respect than profit ; for which reason he retained a right to make the best of his money in the hands of private persons, in the name of one of his clerks. He carried on this commerce for near fifteen years, at the expiration whereof, finding himself possessed of an estate of forty thousand livres yearly rent, he resolved to enjoy it, and the first thing he set about was to procure an advantageous marriage.

He found the daughter of one of the fraternity young and pretty, and very near as rich as himself ; though he was thirty-five years older than she, yet he was bold enough to wed her. Let who will after this say, That Financers want courage and intrepidity. His wife's portion gave him more pleasure than her person ; however, he saw with satisfaction
that

that she was lovely, but unfortunately, he was not the only person that made this remark.

The Chevalier D**** happened to have some pecuniary affairs with him. He had a right to complain, but kept well with him as a resource upon occasion. He went to make him a compliment upon his marriage, a mere ceremonial visit. He found the young married wife pretty, and made a second visit from quite different views. Madam Lardan had not what they call the tone of *polite company*. The Chevalier took upon him the task of being her instructor. He made Lardan throw away vast sums in cloaths, horses, equipages, and costly entertainments. The husband, who wanted in the beginning to give his wife a good idea of him, was all complaisance; he did well, for that is old mens resource, and yet there is often but small account made of it upon some occasions; so that their only resource often fails them. A certain wife man thwarted the Chevalier's projects, by telling Lardan that his wife acted the woman of quality; that he made himself ridiculous by ostentation; that by following a course above his rank, he would, in ruining himself, make a great many enemies, and would at last be conducted to the hospital in a coach of Martin's.

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Lardan relished this advice ; could it but be agreeable to a miser ? He reckoned up his expence, which made him tremble, and that very evening he wanted to begin the work of his reformation. He notified to Madam a plan of conduct which she did not fail to disapprove of, and which the Chevalier found as ridiculous as could be. The poor husband pleaded his cause, but was condemned, with costs.

The next day Madam lost at play a hundred and fifty louis : he raved, but his mouth was soon stopped, by his being assured that she had lost this sum with a Marchioness and two Dukes ; and he was made to understand that a hundred and fifty louis were nothing compared to the honour of playing with Courtiers. All this was said with an air so decisive and peremptory, that he durst not reply : he went to lay his case open to his father-in-law, who laughed at him, and contented himself with telling him, that it was an easy thing to be master in one's own house : an advice so little satisfactory stirred up Lardan's indignation, who took it in his head to imagine that the Chevalier was in love with his wife, and that his assiduous visits might cast a blemish upon his reputation, untainted by usury. He was deceived ; for this Lady's intrigue was so well known, that it was no more talked of but among the Devotees.

He

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He made very serious remonstrances to his wife, she laughed at them; he put on an angry countenance, she came no more home but to sleep: he refused her money: she sold her diamonds: in fine, he gave orders that his door should be shut against the Chevalier: the porter obeyed; Madam heard of it, and by her own proper authority turned this insolent domestic out of doors, who had ventured to obey his master's orders. Such a bold stroke gave a terrible check to the husband's courage; he held his peace, the poor man could do no more. How many husbands, at that time, discoursed upon this adventure, and made a jest of him, who were nevertheless in the same case, almost without being sensible of it?

The Chevalier continued his frequent visits, Madam played, and often lost: she never came home till four in the morning: Lardan said nothing; but at length he took courage to clamour a little louder than before, and to renew his complaints. The Chevalier heard him with an air of disdainful complaisance, and thereafter undertook to make him hearken to reason: Monsieur Lardan, said he to him, you are my friend, you know it well: I would not have you to be angry; I come to your house, because I love you, and you may depend upon it that it does you ho-

nour in the world : let us live well together, no noise : you did not chuse that Madam Lardan should play : ah ! parbleu, people play that they may be doing something : she loses, it is not her fault ; she comes home late, she does well ; and who, pray, goes soon to bed ? Truly, Monsieur Lardan, you have too much of the Burgeſs taſte. Theſe extravagancies ſat pretty eaſy upon the benign huſband, but the word Burgeſs made him outrageous ; he abuſed the Chevalier, who went away at laſt, being very ſeriouſly and earneſtly deſired to leave the houſe.

Lardan conſulted with blockheads, who, with a very profound gravity, adviſed him to be guilty of a great many extravagancies. He began with ſelling Madam's coach and horſes, and afterwards confined her to her room, giving ſo good orders at the gate, that there was no acceſs for the Chevalier, and for fear of being deceived, he ſcarce went any more out. After ſome time, he perceived that his affairs languiſhed, and therefore neglected the guard of his wife to take care of his fortune. He happened, one day, to meet with me at a Merchant's, to whom for a premium, leſs honeſt than lucrative, he furniſhed funds to pay off bills of exchange. He was charmed to ſee me, and, taking me aſide to a remote part of the warehouse, told me his melancholy

choly story. I blamed him very much, but in the manner that we ought to blame people who are embarrassed, that is to say, in reasoning with him: methought I saw that it would be no hard task for me to make him discrete and moderate. I engaged him to come and dine with me the next day; he did not fail, and our conversation ran upon the same subject; I made him sensible, that by his ridicule he obscured his merit; he promised to treat his wife better, upon condition that I would go and see her, and determine her to leave off her follies. I promised to do my endeavours, but not to succeed; I accordingly waited on the Lady, but had the precaution to make a visit to the Chevalier before I went to her house. He was very much of a gentleman; he made no mystery of his good fortune, and begged, without ceremony, that I would be mediator betwixt Lardan and him. I was sensible of all the dignity of this commission, but did not undertake it, and only told him, that if he had access again to his Mistress, he ought to conduct himself with more prudence: but it was talking good sense to a fool. Madam Lardan told me her grievances in a moving manner, but had more discretion than her lover. I did not improve the confidence he had placed in me by owning his happiness, I only told

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her that a husband ought to be kept fair with. Such morality did not sound quite well in her Ladyship's ears, but circumstances made her find it solid, so that I made up matters betwixt this jarring couple, contrary to my expectation.

Lardan did more foolish and extravagant things for his wife, than a young Financer is capable of doing for an Opera girl. He gave her diamonds double the value of what she had sold : he bought her a coach and horses proper for a Princess to make use of, and a Financer to pay for.

The first visit Madam Lardan made, after matters were compromised, was at my house, where I received the female sex, since I had my daughter with me to entertain them. I gave her a dinner in good company, after which she played and gained every body's money. The next day her husband told me she had lost ; I did not think proper to deceive him, but I judged by this, that the frequent losses of which she complained, were invented to conceal the presents which she made her lover.

I mentioned the thing to the Chevalier, but he denied the fact, out of vanity, as I imagined. Madam Lardan lived pretty well with her husband for six months : he was obliged to take a journey into Poitou, to see an estate that he wanted to purchase ; his
wife

wife pretended an indisposition to prevent her being obliged to accompany him ; he loved her, believed her, and set out alone.

Eight days after his departure, I went to visit his Lady, and was told that she was in the country: I imagined that the Chevalier was concerned in this absence, but I happened to meet him the same day, and he seemed to be as much in the dark as I. We both of us believed that a return of affection had carried her to Poitou, and that she would come back with her husband. The Chevalier condemned so sudden a conversion: it is true, the Lady might have easily found what was better than her husband.

At length Lardan arrived, and discovered the error we were under in believing her to be with him, by the surprise he expressed not to find his wife at home. He had her apartment broke open, where Madam had left nothing that could be easily carried off; but what gave the finishing stroke to the despair of this poor martyr to complaisance, was to see his cash-chest open; in which he confessed, some time after, that he had left about a hundred thousand crowns that he had laid up to pay his purchase in Poitou, which, however, he accomplished with ready money. What resources flow from the financing and usuring trade !

A great many officious people were mighty forward in their endeavours to find out the wife, by dishonouring the husband: it was known by the domestics, that one of Lardan's clerks had often visited Madam during the time of her confinement; endeavours were not wanting to find him out, but he had disappeared, and about a year after it was known that they were together in England.

Projectors and givers of advice are more numerous at Paris than friends. Lardan was advised to go and find out his wife, and to prosecute his clerk in England; he relished this project, and set out without letting me know any thing of the matter; but about thirty leagues from Paris he was seized with a fever at an inn in a small village, where grief was his physician, and in twelve days conducted him to his grave.

Madam Lardan kept a regular correspondance in France; she had an account of her husband's death, and returned to take the benefit of a contract of marriage, which was very advantageous to her. The parents of the deceased, though they had trudged it on foot from the extremity of Languedoc, were deprived of the succession, and only had the pleasure of being acknowledged the poor heirs of a very rich Secretary of the King, the widow being entitled to the use and profits

fits of the whole estate during life, besides her claim for a considerable part of the capital as her property.

The clerk had remained in England: The lovely widow sent him word to come over; but he did not think proper to comply, chusing rather to marry where he was, and to keep what he had got in his hands.

Madam Lardan comforted herself for this loss, with the Chevalier, who re-entered the lists. The succession tempted him, and he would willingly have bartered his title of Knight of Malta against that of being successor to a million-man; but he was it not, at least in title. Avarice is often attached to the possession of treasures: the Chevalier found it so by experience. Madam Lardan, while her husband lived, made him many presents, but gave him nothing since she was a widow, for which reason he left her, not being accustomed to live upon love.

Their rupture made a noise; it was told me one evening at Passy, and I related the history of Lardan and his wife to Dona Juanna, who, though she knew neither of them, yet the misfortune of the husband, the coquetry of the wife, the address of the clerk, and the blunder of the Chevalier, diverted her greatly.

Hitherto I had no opportunity of seeing Madam de Vilmane in private ; but if the conversation, which was always general, never touched upon my love, my eyes constantly told her the sentiments of my heart, and I thought I read in hers that the constraint to which I was subjected, gave her pain. I contrived several parties in which I hoped to find some moments of liberty, but was constantly disappointed.

One day I carried our Ladies to the Opera, and had placed myself in such a manner, that I could commodiously entertain Madam de Vilmane ; but a certain person came into our box, whose presence laid me under a constraint ; this certain person was a Nobleman of the first rank, who joined us, with an intention to invite me to sup with him, which I could not refuse ; so our Ladies returned to Passy, and were accompanied by a water-drinker of their acquaintance.

I waited on the Duke of **** to the place of rendezvous, more against than with my inclination ; we stopt at the extremity of one of the suburbs, before a gate that opened the very moment as if by enchantment ; in drives the coach, the gate shuts, and we alighted in a trice ; the master of the house, who was my conductor, took out of his pocket a key, with which he opened three doors one after the

the

the other, and locked them the moment we were got in : In short, after passing through two chambers and a kind of gallery, we found ourselves in a large hall very elegantly wainscotted all round, the half of the pannels were adorned with the gallant mysteries that were celebrated in this Temple of Pleasure : the others were decorated with glasses, in which these pictures were repeated in different points of view. These panes of glass multiplied, to an infinite number, a dozen of wax-candles in a curious chrystal chandelier, placed in the middle of the hall perpendicularly above a table of four covers ready laid. The Duke rang a bell, upon which a door opened, and two nymphs appeared, whose singular dress fixed my attention more than their beauty, though they were both pretty. Their black hair, artfully disposed, without powder, heightened the whiteness of their skin and the vivacity of their looks ; they were covered from head to foot with a sort of habit of rose-coloured taffety, so well fitted to all the parts of their bodies, that it rather adorned than concealed nudity. They saluted us with a grave modesty, which made me expect for our second course a great deal of folly and indecency. They sat down at table, and we placed ourselves by them, observing a profound silence. I could not enough ad-

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mire these beautiful rose-coloured statues, who had nothing white but their faces and hands. They silently diverted themselves with my surprise. At length the master of the house took the Lady's hand who sat next to him, and kissed it. Upon which signal they both fell about our necks, and gave us those kisses which are not wished for, but which we are at first surprised, and afterwards charmed, to receive.

My journey to Spain, and the misfortunes that occasioned it, had made me break off the habit of pleasure, but how easily is it resumed ! Voluptuousness triumphs wherever it is found ; it was impossible for me to resist its allurements, and I made a most delicious supper. When desert was served, a Duegna, that waited on us at table, disappeared. The occasion was equal, and charming for all ; our looks expressed our desires, and every thing invited us to satisfy them. Our conversation was interrupted, and we formed two mute Duo's, but interesting, but charming. We all four got up, and so precisely at one time, as if we had waited for one another. A proof that nature is every where the same. A sofa fourteen foot long furnished one side of the hall ; we placed ourselves upon it, two at each end. The Belle, who was my partner, pretended that her garment was trouble-

troublesome to her, and I did her the service to make her loosen some buttons most ingeniously placed, and which I had not before perceived. This little ceremony put us both at our ease: she judged then that witnesses might make me uneasy, for which reason she pulled a rope, and down dropt a taffety curtain from the cieling, which dividing the sofa in two equal parts, made us lose sight of what did not concern us, so that we had nothing but our own particular affairs to take up our thoughts. In acknowledgment of this attention which the fair one had for me, I made loose some more buttons; the taffety, I do not know how, disappeared by degrees, then it was I realised the ideas that I had formed to myself of beauties which it had concealed: they deserved ardent and effective homages, and I made it my business to render them with a delicious profusion. Every thing became invisible, our neighbours on the sofa, the hall, the lights, and, in short, the sofa itself; yes, the sofa was as much forgot by me, as if it had been an age since I saw it, and I even lost sight at last of the very objects that had been the cause of so perfect a distraction. A moment after, my pleasures revived again, a chance look hit upon a glass placed directly opposite to the sofa, in which I saw, on the other side of the curtain,
a scene

a scene as animated as what I was executing, though different in the manner of acting by the taste and skill of the actors. What picture ! I admired their talents, and endeavoured to imitate them. Four o'clock struck when I scarce thought it was midnight. Our neighbours drew up the curtain. We took some cooling refreshments, and our ladies retired in the same silent manner which they had observed on their coming in. The coach attended in the court, and we left this voluptuous habitation. In our way I complimented the Duke upon the taste that reigned in the admirable disposition of his pleasures ; he seemed to be pleased with my approbation, and setting me down at my own house thanked me for having accompanied him.

Next day I made some reflections on this supper, which soured the remembrance of it. The birth of pleasure is sudden, but its destruction is equally quick, when the heart is not participant ; I could not help reproaching myself seriously with having made a match of debauchery, and indeed such rambles were insufferable in a man of forty, whom an extravagant youth ought to have cured of such mad pranks, and to whom Reason, improved by the experience of misfortunes, ought to have taught that there are no true pleasures but those which cannot be followed with
checks

checks of conscience. In fine, I loved Madam de Vilmane, I had ground to think that, sooner or later, the same sentiments would influence her in my favour; and truly, when a man of ripe years is not wise enough to guard against love, at least he ought not to be guilty of follies scarce pardonable in youth. Such triumphant reasons determined me to act no longer the part of the *Petit-maitre*, which did not all become me. Nevertheless, three days after, happening to meet with the Duke, he made me send away my coach, and carried me to sup with him at the same voluptuous place, without my having the resolution to refuse him. How weak is man!

I was not expected. The Duke left me for a moment, to go and give some orders, and then returned. While our nymphs were getting ready, we amused or, rather, tired ourselves with reading a new piece, to which the whole town flocked.

Do you know, said the Duke before he began, that Melite has left Cleon? he ruined her by his insufferable losses at play: she has taken Damis at even hands, she is in the right; a few days ago they were settling their treaty, but it is now concluded, for this very day they appeared together in a box at the play-house for the first time.

You

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You know Damon's son, that great booby, who has gone through such a variety of employments without being satisfied with any. I advised his father to make him an Abbé, but he never could have got farther than the tonsure, having neither capacity nor impudence.

Clindor had on to day an embroidered suit of a taste Ah! nothing could come up to its beauty, accordingly he succeeded beyond even his wishes; by my faith, he was as much admired as the new piece. Lucinda chose the design, a proof of her gusto, and paid for the cloaths, a proof of Clindor's merit.

Clelia is now quite destitute, which is a pity; she is among the prettiest women in town, has wit and politeness, but her service is terrible. She wanted that Florange should see her every day. O! that is a killing attendance. If I knew her, I would endeavour to bring her to reason; this is enough to discredit her in the world, and I can think of no body that will undertake to be her drudge at the expence of their constitution.

As for Julia, we are not as yet got rid of her. At forty she primes it with Courtiers. She is quite foolish; why does not she lay hold of some gentleman of the robe? she must come to that at last.

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The Baron **** has no longer ****, that is merry enough. A Financer's son has carried her off. The Baron ran to the Belle's, swore and made a noise, but the young Financer spoke of money, and Miss decided in favour of the coin.

The Judge Bibus has played the devil at ****, by breaking glasses and tearing pictures; he thought this would intimidate the Belle whom he adores, but he was much mistaken, she thrust him out of doors to save the rest of her furniture. To-day I was told that he offers twenty thousand livres to repair the damage, which perhaps amounts to fifty pistoles; but the Belle is inflexible, because she loves peace, or does not love Bibus.

I could wish that you had heard a Financer, in a full green room at the play-house, exclaim against the follies that another is guilty of for his Mistress: nothing was more comical: after all, he is to blame: these people ought to do as the Physicians, who always approve of what their brethren have done, though ever so void of common sense.

The kept girls are out of all price, and truly I believe we must, if we intend to deal in that commodity, sell an estate every year: if this continues, the Ladies of fashion will have a fine time on it, it is come to that, even the little **** has set up an equipage.

The Duke enlarged in these little details with a seeming fervency and delight. The story, or, rather, the scandal of the day, is a material ingredient in what they called last year the *good tone*. How many do we find that know no more but this part of it?

We read over at length the new piece to the third act, and notwithstanding his reflections, as wrong as misplaced, I could go no farther. What a strange man are you, said he? how, is it possible that you do not find this piece admirable? No truly, answered I. Ah! you are in the wrong, replied he very seriously, for the house was intollerably crowded. I have already come twice from Versailles to see it, and, besides, it comes from a good hand. I am indeed foolishly fond of the theatrical pieces of some authors.

We had a pretty close dispute upon this subject. I was surprised to find in the Duke a fund of good sense and knowledge, with which he could do himself honour, instead of affecting the common-place and absurd way of talking. He did me at last the favour of leaving it off, and we reasoned a considerable time; he was attentive to what I said, and seemed to relish my sentiments in some particulars. I agree, said he, to the defects that you find in this piece, but the
 versification

versification is fine, and that is all. We know nothing of the œconomy of the drama, but we understand the verses. Besides, our authors are, in their reign, what were formerly Corneille and Moliere, who tire me now to death. So much the worse for you, answered I, they ought to charm you. When I see any thing of Corneille, Moliere, Fontaine, or Crebillon, I ask myself if what I read be the product of mortal composition, so excellent and perfect do I find it. All the others who have wrote are men more or less great, Virtuoso's more or less dignified; Versifiers more or less Poets. Every one of them ought to have his place in the vast number of steps that separate the Admirable from the Detestable. They form a ladder that joins Heaven and earth: at the top are Racine, Fontenelle, Voltaire, Marivaux, Piron, and some others. The middle is absolutely void, and all the rest are below. On the lowest steps, that is to say, in the detestable, are those people who have the misfortune to be born with the fury or necessity of writing, and whose subsistence and pleasure depend upon the success of the impertinencies they say to others. How much are they to be pitied, since fate has reduced them to the cruel alternative of dying with hunger, or living despised! In effect, who
can

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can be more so than he that cannot shine but at the expence of another. I will even go farther ; the reputation of the understanding is often without any dependance upon that of the heart ; a thousand examples prove daily that it is possible to be a very honest man, and yet make a very bad book ; whereas the venom that is thrown upon the works of another, declares a mind incapable of producing any thing of itself, and a heart tormented with envy, of which the sentiments degrade at the same time both the Man and the Author.

We were here interrupted by the arrival of two goddesses, the same I had seen before. A gown of white taffety, and a petticoat of the same colour composed their whole dress ; long black hair reached to their girdles ; to this were joined some diamond aigrettes, a little paint, and a great deal of chearfulness ; which formed a Whole so ravishing that I was transported quite out of myself by a crowd of delicious ideas which possessed me to the very point, if I may so say, of annihilation. I had no more thought.

The Duke was extremely diverted with my surprise, and our divinities were so flattered, that they could not refuse themselves the pleasure of prolonging it by a careful examination. They were both prodigies to
me,

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me, and I was no less so to them. In fine, I recovered out of my state of stupefaction, and grew familiar with pleasure. When the table was served, I disposed myself to be near the Belle whose proximity had so well amused me the first time. Softly, said the Duke, taking her by the hand, every one his turn, if you please, Monsieur de Versorand. The word was no sooner out, than the other placed herself by me. As there was no appealing from this decisive change, I examined my new mistress with attention. I found her as charming as her companion. I was soon wholly taken up with her, and forgot the one who had left me. The supper was gay, and the conversation more free than the first time. The Duke perceived that our Belles were growing bold, he made a sign, which did not fail to be understood, but unfortunately I took notice of it, and guessed at his intention; it was exactly followed, and our nymphs in a moment lost the use of their tongues. Never man had women so under command as this. I was animated by the vivacity with which our conversation had hitherto been carried on, so that the pleasures of the table could not satisfy me. The Duke perceived it, got up, I did the same, and we went to take our posts on the sofa: I was no sooner there than I had all the

the difficulty in the world to restrain my desires. I sought the secret of the curtain, my Belle found it, and set us all four at liberty; her glory interested her in my pleasures, and pressed her to try all possible means to excel her companion, with whom I had appeared to be very well pleased. Her endeavours to charm me were the effect of this powerful motive, and she succeeded in them; she surmounted all manner of difficulties: with her, one was not stopt by that sort of decency of which we preserve at least the idea in the moments consecrated to pleasure, nor by the fatigue which is the consequence of an exercise the more unsufferable, that we constantly abandon ourselves to it without reserve. What vivacity! what promptitude and vigour! I swam in a torrent of delights, of which the impetuous rapidity was till then unknown to me. How often did I forget the pleasure, from having too much of it. In fine, the hour of parting came, it surpris'd me much, and vexed me still more. The Duke forced me away, and I was in the middle of Paris before I had time to think that I was returning.

The next day this obliging nobleman made me a visit. Well, my dear, said he, what do you think of my little retirement? That it is charming, answered I. He received my

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my compliments with a satisfaction that surprised me. It was not long before I discovered the motive. I am young, said he, I love the sex, and this taste hath cost me dear: I have in my life committed follies of all kinds. I gave at first into the theatrical beauties. The vanity of having a woman known and courted by every body dazzled me, but I soon perceived that fidelity makes no fortune upon the stage. Without including the *pass-volants* which chance continually throws in the way, the most exact and most generous man cannot avoid sharing the good graces of a woman-dancer with musicians and the gentlemen of the Capriol. I therefore abandoned the stage, persuaded that with every female belonging to it I should find the same inconveniency. I took successively three amiable young persons; I enriched them, and ruined myself. People richer, or greater fools than I, carried them off from me; in short, tired with being a perpetual dupe, and, besides, no more in a condition to support so terrible an expence, I fitted up the house where you supped last night, which only costs me a hundred thousand livres a year; the expence is moderate, and the pleasures infinite. Nevertheless my creditors are impatient, the Dutchess storms, my family joins with her, all my estates are seized, and I am just approaching
the

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the critical moment, in which I shall be very happy, if my wife will be pleased to give me the necessaries of life. I must therefore abandon my dear little house, the establishment whereof is made with taste and prudence; the women whom you saw in it very seldom stir out, and are under the inspection of the old woman who served at table. You are rich and voluptuous, I have made choice of you for my successor in this temple of undisturbed pleasures, and you have amused yourself enough in it, to make me think I have hit upon the right person.

The Duke's proposal was clear and alluring. I asked time to consider of it, and I do not know how I had the courage to do so. He gave me two days, and went away in a sort of a pet. A moment after Madam de Vilmane sent to desire I would come and dine with her at Passy. The bare sight of her footman determined me. The least thing flatters that comes from one we love. I promised to go betimes, and before I took coach wrote a letter of thanks to the Duke for the offer he had made me, and I have never seen him since. I arrived at Passy, and appeared before Madam de Vilmane with a lively and easy air, that surprised without offending her. She was alone, and I took the advantage of this moment to speak of my
love.

love. I expressed myself with such an assurance, as if she had been under an obligation to me for rejecting the Duke's proposal. I took hold of her hand, which she retired, lifting up her head; this motion gave me by chance an opportunity of stealing a kiss, which we both desired but neither of us durst attempt, otherwise than by way of accident. This kiss animated us, it rendered me more forward, and Madam de Vilmane more condescending. How beautiful was she! how amorous I! Favours, whatever some may say, augment beauty, at least in the eyes of a happy lover. There are moments in which a woman who is only amiable, appears beautiful as an Angel; it is then she who has the advantage of being really so, appears a divinity, a prodigy above expression. I took the advantage of the present occasion with more vivacity than discretion; my ardent kisses had already soiled, in several places, the alabaster of that beautiful bosom, which I admired from the first moment I had been blest with the sight of it. I could already plainly see that it kept measure with the beating of my heart, and that each of its motions renewed all its charms. When Madam de Vilmane saw herself brought to that crisis, in which a woman makes but a poor defence, she of a sudden put a stop to my

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transports: Hold, Versorand, said she; are you mad? Should somebody come in . . . I desire you may desist. She was in the right, the footmen were in the anti-chamber and might surprise us: women are admirable for presence of mind. I went and opened a closet, of which I took the key, and returned towards her with an intention to get her into it. She was standing before a glass, busy in repairing the disorders I had made in her dress: she pulled the key out of my hand, and said with a tenderness, that spoke the situation of her heart, No, let me intreat you to desist, I love you . . . spare me, and you shall not repent your doing so. I obeyed: and in this women truly triumph, when they can persuade us to what is contrary to the taste of pleasure which attaches us to them. Do you conceive how much I love you? said this fair Lady, in making me leave her chamber, lest I should make a second attempt and become more bold. We went down to the garden, and when we were got to a place where we could not be overheard, she threw me a look full of fire, saying: Is it then true that you passionately love me? Ah! Madam, answered I, such a question alarms my heart: is it possible that my passion is come to such a height without your being persuaded of it? Very well, added

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added she, since you love me above all others, I should be unworthy of your attachment if I did not take upon me to prepare you for new troubles ; the share I bear will, I hope, soften them in your mind. Helena is no more here.

Helena ! replied I, with vivacity, and where is she ? That is what you must not know as yet, answered she ; however, be under no concern, learn only a detail into which I did not think proper before now to enter with you. Tell me, first of all, how you came to be acquainted with Monsieur and Madam de Fuentés, with whom Helena came to France.

I know them not, answered I, but all Madrid spoke well of them. Madam de Fuentés was extremely civil to my daughter when she belonged to the play-house ; she was informed that I was her father, that I intended to send her to France, and she joined with me in persuading Helena to undertake that journey.

That astonishes me, replied Madam de Vilmane ; they are very good sort of people ; I have frequented them much since they came to Paris, and I can say that they will bear examination. The opportunities they had of conversing with Helena during the journey, have made them her friends, and their friendship to her laid the foundation of mine : I perceived that their son was desperately in love with your daughter ; I men-

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tioned it to her, and the discovery seemed to alarm her ; she made me understand, that the meanness of her birth and want of fortune, were bars against any thoughts of marriage, and that she only waited for your return to shut herself up in a Convent ; I was very much against this whimsical project. You are a bachelor, Sir, you are rich and absolute master of your estate, you can make your daughter happy, and you ought to do it : I spoke to her as I speak to you upon this head ; I alone have hindered her from entering into a cloyster, and if you suffer it, you deserve not to be her father : time has increased young Fuentés's passion ; in fine, he has declared himself, and I could read in Helena's eyes, when she told me of it, that this young man's passion was more troublesome than agreeable : he deserves to be loved, but she has no inclination to him ; in one word, your daughter, if I am not deceived, has no antipathy to Love, but it says nothing to her in favour of young Fuentés : she begged of me to prevent his having opportunities of seeing her ; I spoke to the father and mother, who, though they think Helena charming, remember to have seen her an Actress at Madrid. Monsieur de Fuentés has sent his son already twice abroad, but he always returns more amorous than when he went away ; in short,
he

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he set out four days since to go and make the tour of Flanders, but he returned privately to Paris. Last night as Dona Juanna, Helena and I, were taking a turn in one of the walks that lead to the ring, Helena in a deep thoughtfulness walked at some distance behind us without our perceiving it; a moment after a coach and six past by very quick, and stopped pretty near us: I thought I heard a cry, and was not deceived; it was Monsieur de Fuentés, who was carrying off his Mistress, I knew him by his voice; I called him by his name, the coach turned, came towards us, I was forced into it with Helena, and that moment drove away, escorted by four men on horseback, of whom the lover made one. We travelled about two hours. I hindered Helena from making any noise, or calling to her assistance the passengers whom we found in the way. I did not chuse to lose Monsieur de Fuentés, and I applaud myself for my prudence upon that occasion. In fine, the coach stopped in the yard of a country-house very lonely, there Monsieur de Fuentés quitted the air of a ravisher, and assumed all the manners of the most submissive lover, and at the same time the most passionate. Helena was furious, reproached him bitterly, declared that the injury he had done her rendered him contemptible in her eyes, and that she

never would pardon him. Fuentés shook from head to foot; he had recourse to me to calm her, telling me his melancholy story with tears in his eyes; he confessed that his parents disapproved of his passion for Helena, and had declared to him that he never should marry her with their consent: This dreadful sentence, said he, makes me desperate; I wanted at least to know if I was loved, this was all I aimed at: I had no criminal designs since I obliged you to accompany the beautiful Helena. He spoke with such openness of heart, that I could not hinder myself from excusing this rash step. In fine, he submitted to every thing Helena required, and even left us: such an obedience must be the effect of very great love. The same coach brought us back here. Helena went out this morning to mass at the Convent of ****. An hour after a message came from her, desiring I would come to the Convent, where I immediately ran with great speed; I found her in the parlour, and she begged most earnestly that I would permit her to remain in that Convent. She is afraid of her lover; she is perhaps afraid too of herself, and by a conduct so discreet and reasonable, she deserves your utmost care to make her happy. The young Fuentés is amiable, his character sweet, and his natural disposition excellent; he has been guilty of a folly, be-
cause

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cause he is amorous ; I am only surpris'd that he has committed but one, or, at least, that he did not support the step he had taken : the little advantage he has reaped from that, his respect for Helena, his attention to carry me off with her, his submission to every thing that was required of him ; all proves the excess of his love, and the purity of his intentions.

Madam de Vilmane had scarce pronounced these last words, when Dona Juanna appeared. She knew all that had pass'd, and comforted me by an encomium on my daughter, which my affection found just, and which her conduct authoris'd. We all three went to the convent. I could not prevent Helena's remaining in it, but I absolutely refus'd my consent to her being a Nun, which she earnestly desired. In short, at the sollicitation of all my friends, who went to see her, I gave her permission to remain for a year in that house as a boarder, at the end of which she promised to leave it.

We return'd all together to Paris, these Ladies having no further occasion to remain at Passy. Dona Juanna lodg'd at my house in place of my daughter, and Madam de Vilmane went to her own. Having now more occasions to entertain her in private, the concerns of my heart were not forgot. My

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love triumphed, because I was happy: for one is so already, when he hopes to be so soon. My daughter's retreat gave me no disturbance. I was fully resolved to let it last no longer than a year, and to have her married when she left the convent.

The young Fuentés went often to see her. His father to whom I had caused a friend speak very seriously, began to get over his scruples. The hopes of my succession made him forget that my daughter had appeared upon the stage; he was affected with his son's passion for Helena, and appeared to wish for this marriage; but I held off, because I remarked that the love of the young man and the aversion of his Mistress encreased from day to day in a conspicuous manner.

I often saw Madam de Vilmane, found her always more beautiful, and pressed her with ardour to complete my happiness. Her tender gaiety presenting me a critical opportunity, I became so daring that she had all the difficulty in the world to get rid of me.

Hear me, said she very seriously, you love me, I am a woman; you ought to imagine that I am not angry at it, I confess that I love you; all is thus said between us. If we did well, we would love one another peaceably, without committing what is silly. Ought we not to leave off such pranks? I because I

am

I am a widow and past thirty, and you because of an age in which, if it is allowable to be in love, Reason ought to govern it. Let us engage in a commerce as solid as friendship, and as amusing as gallantry : this is all I can do for you, my dear ; I am as much sensible of the idea of pleasure as you can be : but I know the consequences are often tiresome, and sometimes fatal. Among young men, contempt, or, at least, disgust is the close attendant of victory, and I have no mind to lose you ; not but that my desires are perhaps as urgent as yours, tenderness and such desires are inseparable. I have no longer that false delicacy of certain women, who allow themselves the delirium of imagination without consequence, and believe their virtue very entire, when they deny their bodies some moments of pleasure, about which their heart and mind are constantly taken up. My sort of modesty, for I do not pretend to pass it upon you for real modesty, is the consequence of most solid reflections. See if you can accommodate yourself to my system. No, Madam, answered I, embracing her with a transport proving clearly that it did not at all satisfy me ; such a plan cannot be relished by one who loves you. No fooleries, replied she, I detest them. I give you leave to disobey me, but I absolutely forbid you to tire

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me with ridiculous compliments. Since you cannot come into my taste, I must comply with yours, in which I shall find as much pleasure, because my happiness depends on yours. Adieu, make no reply, and be here to-morrow at the same hour. This said, she rang her bell, servants appeared, and I went away without knowing if I had reason to be content or not.

Every thing pleases in the woman we love, even her very singularities. Those of Madam de Vilmane charmed me, when I reflected on them. I returned home, and about a quarter of an hour after, as Dona Juanna and I were sitting down to the table, she popped in upon us. Our supper was accompanied with all possible gaiety, and we parted very late.

The next day, I thought time went slower than usual, so great was my impatience for the evening, which at last came, and I went to the rendezvous an hour too soon, for fear of being too late. A waiting-maid stood centry in the porch, who conducted me, very discreetly, up to her own chamber on the second floor, and from thence into another, where she locked me in and took the key with her.

The room was not very large, but it might be justly titled the Temple of Voluptuousness.

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luptuousness. The tapestry was of blue taffety with silverised frames. The cieling was adorned with medallions, that represented love triumphing in different manners. A bergere, also of blue taffety, a little sofa, some elbow chairs, with covers of the same colour, and a toilette, furnished three sides of the chamber. In the lower end was a niche in which there was a bed likewise blue. At each side of the nich, there was a little door which seemed to lead into a wardrobe. The wood of the chairs, and the frames of the glasses were silverised, as well as the sconces and grate of the chimney, and the whole, represented in the glasses, formed a very agreeable perspective.

As I was alone, I advanced to examine the structure of the niche. I saw that it was decorated above, at the bolster, and at the foot with mirrors. I found this tapestry of a taste quite new, and was viewing it when Madam de Vilmane appeared at one of the little doors, without my hearing it opened, so attentive was I in observing this furniture, of which the contriver was at least as voluptuous as the Duke who wanted to sell me his little Temple of Pleasure.

How adorable did my charmer appear to me ! her head-dress consisted of a blue plume placed in her hair, artfully curled and without

H 6

powder :

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powder, her apparel was composed of a single short bed-gown of blue taffety, tied with three white ribbons, a white petticoat trimmed with blue, and very short, white stockings, and blue slippers.

I did not take time to ask her if she would make me happy : I clasped her in my arms, our eyes met, and a moment sufficed to feel our desires, to satisfy them, and to forget; in the extasy, even the love that seemed to transport us out of ourselves.

Sensual extasy, true picture of felicity, why art thou so transient ! how are there men so insensible of the sweets of love ! he that enjoys, though he has long looked for the delicious minute, is he not a thousand times happier than he who has languished out his life in cold indifference !

Pleasure has intervals, it must be so to have the true relish of it. We came to ourselves again, and I was surprised to find myself upon the bed with Madam de Vilmane ; she appeared to me a perfect Venus. My greedy eyes devoured her charms : I saw in the mirrors, that every where surrounded the bed, four other goddesses in my arms, and in different points of view ; all abandoned themselves without reserve to my voluptuous caprices, all exerted themselves with the highest endeavours, to complete my happiness, and were participant in it.

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Madam de Vilmane possessed more, than any of her sex, the talents of the *tête à tête*. She was voluptuous, what do I say? she was Voluptuousness itself. She passed, with an incredible rapidity, from that fiery petulance which produces transports, to that soft languishment which rouses and ravishes the most insensible.

Our expiring tapers gave the signal of retreat at two in the morning. Madam de Vilmane put on a gown, and I put myself in a condition to appear. We went down to the Lady's toilette closet, where we had a repast, plain but delicate and solid, and which was served by the waiting-maid alone. See if all my people be gone to bed, said the mistress to her. The girl went out, and returning in a moment, told her that she saw no light any where. So much the better, answered her lady. I listened, without being able to conceive the meaning of the question, or of the answer, but she in a moment unriddled the mystery. You are in the mode, said she, you perhaps love the blazing pleasure, and you look upon me, at least as an extraordinary woman, because I keep measures with myself: such is my taste; a great many women are fonder of their lovers for the honour they think they acquire by having them, than for themselves; from
thence

thence it comes that they easily change them. As for me, I love upon reflection, and for myself alone, I will neither be deprived, by scruples, of the pleasures that flatter me, nor, by indecencies, acquire a title that I detest, and it is to keep my affairs from the knowledge of the public that I conceal them from my domestics. This girl alone is in the secret of our amour, I know her fidelity, and am not afraid of her indiscretion. Every time you come to my house to remain in it as long as you have done now, come alone, without coach, and without attendants : it shall be my business to have you reconducted to your own house. She kept her word exactly. After supper the waiting-maid, who had a double key to the street-door, conducted me without noise. When the door was opened, two chairmen presented themselves, I got into their chair, and they carried me home, where I directly went to bed, with an intention not to sleep, but to pass the remainder of the night in reflecting upon my happiness ; but I was so fatigued, that I fell asleep before I had half finished my reflections. When I awaked, I began to think of the mysterious air with which Madam de Vilmane conducted herself : she loves pleasure, said I to myself, indulges voluptuousness in the most refined manner, and withal will preserve her reputation

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tion. It is very probably an additional pleasure to her to enjoy delights which, in the opinion of the public, she denies herself. I was lost in these thoughts, and after a long examination found myself as undetermined as before. The first opportunity that offered, I proposed my difficulty to the fair lady who was the cause of it. She laughed at my embarrass, and had the complaisance to clear up my doubts. All our sex, said she, are born with more or less reason, and more or less natural temperament. The strongest always prevails: if the balance happens to be on the side of constitution, a woman's whole life is employed in forming desires and gratifying them. It is the necessity of indulging her natural propensity to pleasure, that forces her to move in the public sphere of gallantry: besides, so many of your sex judge of the value of our favours by the compliments paid them on their conquests, that in order to secure the constancy of such lovers the silly women are forced to humour their madness. This complaisance is become an established custom. The woman of quality follows it by taste, and the city lady to give herself a Court air. Those with whom Reason bears the sway, by no means the greatest number, lay down such a plan, that they indulge their taste without breaking in upon their principles.

I am

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I am of the last class. I was married young, thought pretty, my husband was amiable, adored me, and I became at last in love with him in the strict literal sense. He was voluptuous, and made me so too. He projected the closet which you have seen, in which we passed many delightful hours, with as much pleasure as a lover and a mistress can enjoy. However, as Monsieur de Vilmane was whimsically nice upon the point of ridicule, he would not have it to be known that he loved me: he had his acquaintances that were none of mine, and we behaved in public as people of quality usually do, that is to say, so estranged, as if we scarce knew one another. He died, I was still young, the loss of a husband did me no damage as to fortune, but I lost a lover the most tender and the most dearly cherished, and as such I will remember him while I live. I love the world, I remained in it a widow, rich, and without children. Madam Futil happened to fall in my way; our first acquaintance was in the Convent, and having thereafter renewed it, we soon became inseparable; because her house being the rendezvous of a great many originals, I amused myself in it better than elsewhere. I saw you there for the first time, you directly appeared in a favourable light to my imagination, but you were engaged; I made

made no attempt to carry you off from my friend, on the contrary, I rendered you both all the services in my power. You fell out afterwards, my taste for you recommenced; I have done all that can be done for a person for whom we are interested, and I am not sorry for it. Since your return from Spain, the pleasure of seeing you has touched me more deeply than before, your love has augmented mine, and been productive of my desires. I have been sensible that people do not love for love's sake, and that I was as voluptuous as formerly. In fine, I am my own mistress, I have made you happy. I know very well that I might have avoided falling into the foibleſſe of which I am guilty, by giving you my hand at the foot of the altar, but, my dear, we are both of us free; why should we wantonly load ourselves with chains? were we married would your happiness be more complete? No surely, we should be deprived of the liberty of parting when we loved one another no longer, if that should happen, as it may happen upon one side, as well as the other.

Madam de Vilmane's decisions were always oracles with me. I made no reply, I approved of her ideas, and what reason could I have had to combat them? of what use is the title of spouse, when we have all the privileges

privileges belonging to it? It cloyes us upon account of that regard which a man would chuse to pay his wife, but does not for fear of passing for an old-fashioned simpleton. It authorises that very wise to neglect a man who cannot get his neck out of the halter, and if she be pretty, it brings gallants who would leave her to her lover had he not married her. This plan of conduct appeared to me to be singular, and happening some days after to fall into a brilliant circle, I gave a full account of it without mentioning names. I only said that one of my friends had been in an intrigue with the woman I mentioned.

What ridicule! cried a brilliant dame, where is the wit of such a scheme? to be afraid of a lover. Fie upon it. It is no more nor less than to be ashamed of taste and manners. She loved not that man but for herself and him. This is what we call having a husband and loving him, the one is as ridiculous as the other. She might be truly said to be a phoenix in the female world with respect to gallantry. They said of her what they say of a lawyer, that she did not faithfully discharge the duties of her office. Ah! you play the wag, Sir, such a woman as that is a mere reasoning being.

The ridicule they endeavoured to throw upon my Mistress made no diminution of her accom-

accomplishments in my eyes. I continued to enjoy my happiness, which augmented daily. Chance paved the way for our being still at more liberty. Dona Juanna took a journey into the country to learn news of her husband, whose retreat she had not as yet been able to discover. As she had always made a mystery to us of her true name, we could be of no service to her in her enquiries, and we did not insinuate the least desire of knowing a secret which she did not think proper to let us into. She went away without leaving us better instructed in her affairs, and even did not tell us where she was going.

Some time after, Madam de Vilmane received a letter from a brother whom she thought long since dead. She confessed that he was formerly a profligate, whom his parents had resolved to confine during his whole life. He wrote to her that he had been a great traveller, and that he intended to come to Paris with a small fortune that he had acquired. He is my brother, said she, rich or not, I must receive him; the half of the estate I enjoy belongs to him; no matter, I shall be very well pleased to see him; time has perhaps reformed him; if it be so, I shall love him with all my heart. His name was Monsieur de Prevol, so the family was called, he bore the arms of it. This was all that

Lady

Lady knew, not having seen him since she was a child.

Eight days after, he arrived ; Madam de Vilmane received him, not as relations are in such cases received, that is to say, very badly, but as they ought to be received, that is, extremely well. I gave him an apartment in my house, and we concerted that Dona Juanna should lodge at Madam de Vilmane's upon her return. This traveller, charmed to find so lovely a sister, did not let her long remain ignorant of his situation. He began with refusing any share of the family estate, and shewed us a letter-case which contained bills of exchange on the best Bankers of Paris for more than two hundred thousand crowns. I never was fond of money for my own sake, but very much for others. I was charmed that Monsieur de Prevol gave entirely up to his sister the family estate, and his generosity acquired him my esteem. As he lodged at my house I had often occasion to see him ; we conceived a good opinion of one another, and a nearer acquaintance made us friends.

Some days passed before we asked Monsieur de Prevol any questions about his adventures. His silence appearing affected, we were afraid to disoblige him by forcing him to break it. He approved of every thing that his sister and I did, without ever asking the reason,
and

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and I never before had seen a man so peaceable, nor so indifferent. When he had studied us, he knew us better, and spoke more. He was a man of the old stamp, whose system would not do in this polite age, where acquaintance begins by indiscretion, and ends by repentance.

We offered him a coach and horses, he thanked us with that blunt politeness natural to seafaring men: he hired a coach by the month, with which he drove up and down town every day from morning to night. It is not, said he one evening at supper, that I would make a mystery of the places I go to, but that I love to do my affairs myself, and that none else should know them. This air of independence will appear ridiculous to you Parisians, but if you went to the Indies, or only to Martinico and St. Domingo, you would find that you are very ridiculous, and not be in the least doubt about it. At St. Domingo, Sir, said I, have you been there?

Parbleu, without doubt, answered he, I lived there several years. If that be so, replied I, you can tell us news of one named Godfrey. Yes, replied he, that is very easy; that Godfrey was a Frenchman, is it not so? Yes, said I, he was young and handsome, and his profession was a Book-keeper in that country. Very well, replied
Monsieur

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Monfieur de Prevot, what you fay there is true. He was afterwards married to a Spanifh woman, and I do not perfectly know what is become of him fince, but if you have any intereft in him I can inform myfelf by people here, who can fatisfy your curiofity, and I fhall let you know what difcovery I make. I faid nothing more particular on this fubject, being unwilling to difclofe Dona Juanna's fecret without her permiffion. I engaged Madam de Vilmane to act with the fame difcretion, and we both waited with impatience till we heard what news he fhould bring us.

About eight days after he came home one evening pretty early; Madam de Vilmane and I were in private. Word was brought us of his arrival, and we came down in a very little time after. Come, faid he with an eafy and pleafed air; I have a comical ftory to tell you. I have juft now killed a man almoft without perceiving it. Heavens! cried I, if it be fo, you muft directly make your efcape. For what reafon, replied he, would you have me to fly? That is all I could do were he ftill alive, and fafe enough to accufe me as the aggreffor; but hear me, faid he, and be afraid of nothing. I was on foot alone when I met with him, I upbraided him a little fharply with a dirty trick he had

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had played me ; he shuffled, I gave him a box on the ear ; he drew, and so did I ; we fought, he was killed, and this done, I came off without any mortal's seeing what had passed, and here I am : but I must let you know the pretty trick he played me. He was a man of a handsome figure, witty, and polite ; he knew the town well, and I took a pleasure to hear him give the history of every body that happened to be mentioned in conversation. Such acquaintances are very entertaining for new-comers such as me. I was almost constantly with him. Our place of rendezvous was in the morning at the Royal Palace ; I often treated him with dinners at Aubry's, and from thence we went to the Opera or Play-house, where he knew every mortal.

He was with me when I bought the cloaths on my back ; I fell in love with the merchant's wife : I made my friend my confident, and he managed matters so, that in less than a week I dined with my Mistress ; after dinner I spoke of love as I felt it, that is to say, with great ardour. The Belle appeared first to be terrified, but let me however speak on ; I wanted to take some liberties, but she prudently put a stop to my freedoms, making me observe that we were not alone. I understood the meaning of this,
and

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and next day wrote her a letter, desiring a rendezvous. She fixed it for the following week, when her husband was to go for Lyons, and she promised to be at my disposal all the time of his absence.

A little waiting-maid, who was the confident, let me in every night, through the shop, at the hour of twelve, when every body was in bed, and conducted me without noise and without light, to Madam's bedroom, which I left early in the morning, going out in the same manner I came in. All this happened when I told you I was going to the country for eight days. I had but two more to enjoy my good fortune, when I had occasion for a hundred louis in gold to send to Strasbourg. I asked several persons, who could not furnish me with what I wanted. I spoke of it to my Belle in the evening, who promised to let me have them at our first meeting.

The next day my good friend, to whom I likewise addressed myself upon the affair of the gold, told me that he had found out one who would do my affair. I thanked him for his offer; confessing that the Merchant's pretty wife had undertaken to render me this service. He congratulated me anew upon my having acquired the good graces of so pretty a woman; and as happy lovers are fond of babbling

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babbling, I was indiscrete enough to let him know all that had passed betwixt the lady and me. Afterwards he begged permission to leave me for an hour upon business of consequence. We appointed to sup together, and I went to settle some affairs with my Banker, till the hour of our meeting.

On coming out I met a sort of peasant, who presenting me a letter, begged I would be so good as to read the direction for him. I was very much surprised to find it was addressed for Monsieur de Prevol; I told the porter that the letter was for me, and I directly opened it. The hand was unknown to me, but I saw by it that my correspondent at Marseilles, on his road to Paris upon some business, was taken dangerously ill at Fontainebleau, and that he begged I would come there without loss of time, having papers of great consequence, which he could not trust to any body but me; adding, that he had not strength to write to me himself, and that he was so bad, unless I made haste I could not hope to see him alive.

Has one upon such a surprise all his wits about him? I did not ask this messenger how he found out my Banker's name and place of abode, nor if he had been to call for me at your house. I went into the first sadler's shop, hired a post-chaise, sent for horses, and

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set out that minute without baggage or servant, after buying boots for the peasant, who offered to attend me and bring me to the inn where the sick person lay.

While I was on the road loudly exclaiming against the accident that deprived me of the pleasure of seeing my Mistress, my Confident, wrapt up in a great coat like mine, appeared at my Mistress's door at the hour of my going there. The waiting-maid, not doubting but that it was I, introduced him first into the chamber and then into Madam's bed, where he supplied my place to admiration. The obscurity favoured him, and he had the happiness of making the Lady sensible of no other change but what must be agreeable to her. He spoke not a word, but the most brilliant eloquence is in such a case of very small merit. When the hour of parting came, he told her in a low voice that he would take, at another opportunity, the hundred louis, having forgot to bring the value with him. Does a woman mistrust a lover who has past the night with her? Never. The Lady gave him the purse, saying that he might send the money next day; so out he went, having received a hundred louis for one night which several would have purchased at the expence of a thousand.

On

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On my part, I did what people riding post usually do : I swore at the roads, the horses, and the postillions. I arrived at Fontainebleau about two in the morning. The first thing I did was to call my peasant, but he was not to be found. As he was a bad rider, I thought he had fallen behind, but after waiting some time without his appearing, I concluded that his horse had thrown him, and I ordered the postillion, who returned to Chailly, to seek and assist him. But he assured me that no person attended me when my horses were put to the chaise at Chailly ; I treated him as a visionary, and he went away with the same idea of me.

I passed the rest of the night in beating up the inns, to enquire for my correspondent, without success. In fine, I returned to the post-house, where I was assured that no traveller had come from Marseilles for fifteen days past. I read over again the letter, I called to mind that the messenger had disappeared, I was struck with the idea of my being imposed upon, without knowing whom I could tax with it. I set out again for Paris, and drove straight to my confidant's, but he had changed his quarters. I was wearied, so went to the bagnio where I lodged, and immediately to bed, and I slept till night. On my awaking I sent to the coffee-house

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where my friend usually went, and the messenger was told there, that he was gone into the country. I got up surprised at this sudden eclipse, I supped very well, and went betimes to the rendezvous, where I made a great many excuses to my Belle upon my being absent the night before. She was almost smothered with laughing. I related my journey to Fontainbleau, this made her still laugh more, and at length she asked me, if I had sent away the louis d'ors. For a quarter of an hour we had been at cross-purposes; this question decided all, and we came at last to an explication. I was obliged to confess that I had a confidant, who had, no doubt, made a bad use of my secret. She did not seem to be angry, as the thing was past remedy. I promised to give her the 2400 livres; and I left her at the usual hour. In bidding me adieu, she told me her husband would arrive that very day, and that she could see me no more till he took another journey. I promised to take patience, and I sent the money by the time she got out of bed. She sent me a letter of thanks, which ended with a sharp reprimand for my indiscretion in committing her honour, for which she could not easily forgive me; declaring, at the same time, that I must not expect to see her any more; and I did not break my heart,

• This

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This happened about fifteen days since, and I thought no more of it, when this evening I met with my hundred-louis chap. I made him my compliment upon his address, he was piqued, I have killed him, that is all.

Let us now speak of your Godfrey. Why do you interest yourself in him? We confessed that we knew his wife, who was hunting after him all over France. * Very well, said he, restore her then to me, for I am that Godfrey myself. I had taken that name that I might not carry to the West-Indies that of a Family which could not but be unknown there. My dear Juanna, where is she? We told him that she had undertaken a journey without our knowing where she intended, but that she had promised to return soon. We instructed him in some particulars of which he was ignorant, as the departure of Dona Juanna from St. Domingo, her return to Spain, her marriage, her flight, and the services I had rendered her. *

Two days after, Madam de Vilmane received a letter from her, by which she sent word that her husband was certainly at Paris, and that she would be there in fifteen days. This letter had been delivered to the porter, and as it came not by post, we could not tell from whence Dona Juanna wrote. Monsieur de Prevot not knowing which way to go and

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meet her, or write to her, waited her arrival at Paris with great impatience.

One day walking with him in my garden I begged he would favour me with a relation of his adventures. That is just, said he; for you was not present when I recounted them to my sister.

THO' you are Madam de Vilmane's friend, perhaps you may not know our family. My father having seen his four elder brothers die by a contagious distemper that reigned in Picardy, from which we are originally, laid aside the cross of Malta. He married my mother, who had for all men, except my father, an aversion as much misplaced as singular. For this reason she was faithful to my father, or, rather, to her ridicule. I came into the world about a year after their marriage; she was long indisposed for mere grief of not having a daughter instead of me, and she had not the wished-for satisfaction till about five years after by the birth of my sister. She loved her as much as herself, and more than the whole universe put together. In the idea that I should deprive my sister of a part of her succession, she was night and day tormented, and made me expiate, by bad usage, the fault which she thought she had committed in bringing me into the world. I had, besides, two brothers,
who

who died young, she was charmed, and I was sorry, because they assisted me in bearing a share of her indignation, of which, in the sequel, I was obliged to bear the whole weight. So soon as I was in a condition to go to college, I was sent to it, and my mother took care that it should be at Paris, that I might be at the greater distance from her. My sister, though young, was sensible how unfortunately I was situated, and endeavoured to comfort me by all the attentions that children are capable of. I had already passed two years out of my father's house, when the war commenced. My father, who was a Colonel of horse, took the field, and left his wife the management of his estate, and the education of his children, my sister and me. He passed six years without coming to Paris. Upon his return, he judged that I knew enough for one that was to follow the military trade. He took me from the college, and put me to the academy. My mother, who intended to finish the work of my sister's education, came likewise to settle at Paris, where she gave her all those famous masters, by a concourse of whom the country-gentry distinguish themselves, expend a great deal, and learn very little. In the spring my father went away again for three years, and during that time the bad reception I

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always met with from my mother, when she allowed me to come to her house, made me turn libertine with my companions of the academy. My sister gave me a great deal of money, and I spent still more. I gamed, sometimes with good luck, and often with bad. I had made acquaintance with a pretty woman, a citizen's wife, who unfortunately loved me enough to abandon her husband. I placed her with a cook-maid in a small apartment, where, though she spent but little, I soon found that she cost me too much, and not daring to ask my sister for so much money as I wanted, I contracted debts, and, by the means of some little bankruptcies, supported myself for two years.

My father judging that I was then in a condition to serve, sent for me. I loved my Mistress, I wanted to gain one year longer ; I pretended a bad state of health, and did not go. My father was offended, and with reason. My mother, who sought all occasions to mortify me, wrote to him that I was guilty of a thousand actions unworthy of a gentleman. He believed her, because he loved her : she proposed my being sent out of Paris, he consented. The war ended, the commission I was to have in his regiment was disposed of : my father was enraged against me, and it was from that moment determined

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determined that I should be shut up in St. Lazare till they should consider how to dispose of me. I was therefore arrested, and constituted prisoner among the Lazarites, where the retired manner of living was so disagreeable that I attempted several times to make my escape, but still without success. Though I miscarried in all the schemes I formed to procure my liberty, I did not lose courage, and my head was continually filled with new projects. I communicated them to one of my fellow-sufferers, who had as much resolution as I. We had many and long conferences upon the misery of our wretched state, but always parted under the deepest concern that we could think of no means to soften the rigours of our fate. However, happen what would, we affected more docility, and by that means deceived our inspectors. As we were walking in the large inclosure that belongs to this house of correction, we remarked a place where we could climb up the wall, and three days after we made our escape at this very place without being observed by the Lay-brothers who were our guard, they happening at that critical time to be at a distance, and in a place where they could not see us. The wall was higher on the outside than we thought, and we had a very fair chance of breaking our bones,

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and perhaps our necks, but we escaped the danger, and made the best of our way to town.

My comrade was older than I. His father was a rich merchant in Paris ; he had been sent to Lyons and Marseilles to learn commerce, and had there given into the disorders usual to youth, which had been the occasion of his confinement. As neither of us could pretend to go to our relations, he put it in my head to take a voyage to the West-Indies, where he assured me that we would infallibly make our fortunes. His advice was not bad, so many blockheads go there and return rich, that we might hope to have as good luck as others.

A friend he had in town lent him six louis d'ors, with which we equipped ourselves to travel on foot to Marseilles, where, by the means of his acquaintances, we found an opportunity of going to the Indies on board one of the company's ships. I was young, I was extremely sick during the voyage ; at length we arrived. My friend had talents of which they make but small account in France, and which are, however, of great use all the world over, as a man possessed of them is capable of being employed by the merchants. He was immediately set to work, and as they had occasion for him,
care

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care was taken of me, though I knew nothing. We remained two years in the Indies, during which he employed his spare time in teaching me accounts and book-keeping. I had the misfortune to see him die when we were beginning to hope for a more easy and comfortable life. I was so much affected with this loss, that I thought no more of advancing myself. I refused my friend's place, which was offered me, and resolved to return to France. I entered on board a ship that was going upon trading voyages, and after many trips, which lasted about two years and six months, I settled at last at St. Domingo, and you know what happened to me there, since Dona Juanna has told you her story.

One day I happened to see a man (who belonged to a French ship) whom I had seen at Paris, and who had been my mother's footman. I learned from him that she had published my death, and that my father judging me lost, had married my sister to one Monsieur de Vilmane, a Captain of horse, for whom he hoped some time or other to obtain his regiment; that Monsieur de Prevol died in a short time after this marriage, and that my mother had not survived him above a year. This man came to the island in the retinue of a new Governor,
into

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into whose service he had entered immediately after my father's death.

My marriage with Dona Juanna put me in a situation to be very indifferent about the family estate, but I could not resist the desire I had to see my sister, and to let her know the fate of a brother whom she had tenderly loved, and to whom she was still dear. My design was to settle at Paris, to bring up my son there, who was then but a year old, and to put him, when age permitted, into the military, that he might be useful to his country, and perform, for himself and me, the duties incumbent upon a gentleman.

I left St. Domingo, the first opportunity of a ship bound for France. Some days after our departure we were attacked by three English ships (France was then at war with England) we were all made prisoners and conducted to an English colony upon the coast of America, where we found a great many other prisoners employed in cutting the woods and clearing the ground. After remaining about a year in this captivity, I obtained my liberty by an exchange of prisoners, and took my passage in a Dutch vessel bound for Lisbon, but had the misfortune to fall into the hands of an Algerine cruiser who carried our ship into Algiers, and made slaves of every soul in it. I was bought by a Spanish Renegado,
one

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one of the most barbarous wretches upon earth: he treated me with the utmost severity, though I spoke his language, and had for him all the regard that a slave is capable of, who endeavours to gain the good graces of his master. I passed five years in a very grievous slavery, constantly employed in the most laborious and vile labour, having no other relaxation but the time that was necessary to give lessons to two young boys, sons of this Renegado, who had neither genius nor docility, which gave me great uneasiness, because their father rendering me, with the greatest injustice, answerable for their progress, treated me as bad as they learned.

Two of my fellow slaves, oppressed with his cruelties, strangled him one evening, and made their escape. So soon as I was informed of what had happened, I followed their example. Necessity made me lay hold of a little coffer, in which I thought there was money, but instead of gold I found jewels, which I sold afterwards to an American who had sheltered me for some time. He promised to facilitate my return to my own country, and about two months after I embarked with one of his friends, who trafficked to several European ports. This last left me at Lisbon, where my first care was to look out for a ship to go and join Dona Juanna;
but

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but finding none, I came to France, where I learned from some travellers, that my wife and son had left St. Domingo, but they could not tell where they were gone. I did not imagine they were gone to Madrid, knowing that Dona Juanna did not much love her own country, and therefore concluded that she was in France. I visited all the most considerable towns in the kingdom to find her, but to no purpose. In fine, I was seized with a sort of slow fever, which detained me six months at Marseilles; where, as it is a sea-port town, I the more willingly remained, in hopes of hearing news of my dear Dona Juanna. By accident, I thought of a young Spaniard whom I had formerly known, and who had given me his direction at Madrid: though I was not absolutely certain of his being there, I wrote to him, and begged he would inform himself about my wife and son, without letting him know that they belonged to me: he wrote me, a long time after, that he did not know the Lady whom I had mentioned, but that a Jacobin Friar of his acquaintance, to whom he had addressed himself, appeared to be no stranger to that Lady. I wrote to this Monk, named Father Don Sebastian. He sent me word that Dona Juanna was alive, and would willingly settle matters so as to come and join me, with my son, in France;
but

but for reasons which I should know in the sequel, I must not come to Spain. Though I did not penetrate into the reason of this mysterious caution, it did not trouble me. I was too much charmed to hear of my wife and son's being alive, to think of any thing but the pleasure of seeing them again.

I received no more letters from the Jacobin Friar. I thought Dona Juanna would write to me, or come herself; vain hopes, I heard no more of her. I was afraid of some misfortune, and so soon as my health permitted, I set out for Spain. I had presumed too far upon my strength. About forty leagues from Madrid I fell sick in a poor country village, where I was obliged to remain four months. In fine, I arrived at Madrid, and went directly to Father Sebastian, who told me that Dona Juanna was at Paris with my son. This news grieved me as much as any thing that had hitherto happened. This prudent Monk did not mention you, Sir, though you was still at Madrid. He did well, for jealousy infallibly would have completed my despair, had I known that Dona Juanna lay under such essential obligations to you. It is not very common to render disinterested services to a pretty woman; but this opinion prevails no more, unless with a husband who is out of humour.

Though

Though I had several acquaintances at Madrid whom I had known during my travels, I resolved to see none of them but only my old friend who had addressed me to Father Sebastian, so that I returned to France without reaping any other advantage from my journey but a great deal of fatigue and grief.

Father Sebastian could give me no direction how to find Dona Juanna, he neither knew the name she would take, nor when she would arrive at Paris. I came to it however, and made all possible enquiry to find her out, but still in vain. So many disappointments and vexations had made me almost forget my sister; however, at last she came into my mind, and I resolved to spend the remainder of my life with her. When I was determined to see her, I durst not attempt it: a thousand disagreeable ideas opposed my design. I imagined that she had long forgot me, that my return would make her uneasy, because she might be apprehensive of seeing herself, by that means, less rich than she thought: in short, that Monsieur de Vilmane would not look favourably on a brother-in-law, who returned from the farthest part of the globe to ruin him. All these reflections determined me to go to Marseilles to settle my affairs with a Banker there, in whose
hands

hands the greatest part of my fortune lay. It is now pretty considerable, because in my different voyages I carried on trade. I confess that my first funds were not lawfully acquired, but the necessity I was under then, and the impossibility of restoring them now, stifle my remorses. All those at Paris who are possessed of ill-got wealth, have they so powerful motives to calm their scruples?

I wrote from Marseilles to my sister, and she sent me an answer such as I durst not hope for, and I directly settled my affairs to return to Paris. The day before my departure, my Banker received a letter from Madrid for me, it was from father Sebastian; the impatience I was under to see what it contained, made me break open the seal with great precipitation and heedlessness; the letter flew out of my hands and fell into a great fire, and all I could recover of it was some pieces, by which I saw that Dona Juanna and my son were arrived in good health at Paris. This discovery satisfied me. I immediately took post to have the pleasure of seeing the sooner all that is most dear to me in the world. The mystery that my wife has made of her journey hinders me from going to find her, but I hope she will soon return: Alas! shall I have found my sister again to lose an object so dear to me? Scarce had
Monsieur

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Monsieur Prevol ended his narration, when a message came from his sister, desiring that we would come to her house directly: we went with the eagerness which generally attends disquiet; we found four persons there whom we very little expected to see at that time, viz. Dona Juanna and her son, Father Sebastian of Madrid, and a young man whom we did not know. Monsieur de Prevol was as much charmed as a husband can be, who after a very long absence sees a wife again whom he tenderly loves. He was in such extasy of delight that his happiness seemed to over-power him: he took his son in his arms, he left him to embrace his wife, and all this with a vivacity and passion so remarkable, that we shared in the pleasure they enjoyed by this happy interview. Father Sebastian had at last his turn.

Madam, said he, addressing himself to Madam de Vilmane, excuse the liberty I have taken to come to your house, without having the honour of your acquaintance. Dona Juanna, whom I met upon the road, conducted me here, otherwise I intended to have gone to Monsieur de Versorand's; a happy chance brings all the friends I have in France together, and I flatter myself they will share in the joy I feel in presenting to them this young man, who is the fruit of my love for the unfortunate Brigitte. I come to
France

France with an intention to beg of Monsieur de Fuentés to give my son a part of what he offered to restore to me when I returned to Spain about fifteen years ago.

We were all charmed to see Mendez (the name of this young man :) he was of a lovely figure, with a great deal of sweetness in his countenance. From the very first moment he seemed to be attached to me, by an effect of that sympathy which is sensibly felt, but not at all to be accounted for. We supped all together ; after which M. de Prevot and his wife disappeared : their absence was soon perceived ; but no search was made after them : we all knew how much a man and his wife have to say to one another in such a case. Father Sebastian informed us that he had been at Marseilles upon some affairs for friends in Madrid, and that he had found Dona Juanna there. That she had told him, her business in that place, and every where else, being only to find out her husband, she was constantly employed in writing letters to all the sea-port and other towns, where she could hope to hear news of him. That the answers giving her no satisfaction, she had resolved to visit several sea-port towns herself : and that being afraid we would not approve of her project, she had not told us precisely where she was going.

I had

I had a great desire to know how father Sebastian had recovered his son, but it was already too late, and as there is no such thing as desiring travellers to sit up all night, we parted. Next day we were informed, that Madam de Prevol having learned from the Banker at Marfeilles that her husband was at Paris, took post to come to it without stopping night or day : though such eagerness was but natural, yet I admired it. What is contrary to the customs of our country always surprises us.

We went to M. de Fuentés's, who expressed a great deal of pleasure in the visit of Mendez and his father : a new subject of astonishment to me, flowing from the same principle. He renewed the offer of restoring the whole estate of the house of Xuarés ; Father Sebastian refused it, and in that appeared to me to be the more generous of the two. He only desired that M. de Fuentés would give his son wherewith to live honourably with a simple annuity, and declared that he would accept of nothing else. M. de Fuentés represented that he forced him to commit an injustice ; but all his remonstrances were to no purpose. In fine, he consented to give such an annuity as Mendez would ask. Father Sebastian would not have it to be fixed : and M. de Fuentés, piqued with so
much

much nobleness on the Monk's part, spoke high, and we parted without coming to any decision: they were so obstinate upon both sides that I was afraid they would not agree.

Some days after, Father Sebastian went to pass a couple of days in the country, with a Spaniard a friend of his who lived at Paris. He left his son with us, who seemed to be very much pleased to remain with Madam de Vilmane and me. That lady was curious; as being a woman, she had a right to be so: she desired to know the adventures of this young man, who in the evening, after supper, recounted them in the following manner.

The End of the Fifth PART.

PART

P A R T VI.

AFTER the death of Don Sanches, and the departure of my father, the unfortunate Brigitte had the grief of seeing her mother arrested, who stood accused of Don Sanches's murder. She was dragged to prison, where she languished for a long time, the Judges not having sufficient evidence to punish her for the crime of which they thought her guilty. In short, what is the case with many others happened to her; under the torments of the rack she confessed all that they desired, and died ignominiously.

Brigitte was without fortune and without resources; but she was beautiful: a merchant of Salamanca found her so, and furnished her with all necessaries from the day of her mother's imprisonment. She perceived herself to be with child, but kept it a secret from her new lover. In fine, she died in bringing me into the world, the next day after her mother's cruel execution. The merchant thought that this misfortune had advanced my birth, and that I was the fruit of his love for Brigitte. He loved me as much as he had done her, and had me carefully brought up under
the

the eyes of a woman whom he had placed about my mother.

It is to the goodness of this benefactor that I owe the education which I had the happiness of receiving. I shall say nothing of the first years of my life, having but a very confused remembrance of the events that preceded my benefactor's death. My governante learned that he had been killed in a sea engagement, as he was returning from America (to which he often made voyages) in a ship richly laden. This good woman had nothing to depend upon but the protection of the merchant, and she was sadly afflicted at his loss. I was then fifteen, I participated in her grief, or, rather, I was the only person who really felt it. I forgot the benefits, and regretted only the benefactor, and I had no disquieting thought upon my situation, until misery began to surround us. I knew a great part of what they learn youth who are destined for commerce; my governante wanted to take advantage of my talents; for which reason she wrote to some relations she had at Madrid, who promised to secure me a place; and in order to make the journey, we sold the little furniture we had, which procured us just as much money as was necessary; so that we were at the bottom of our purse, when we reached the end of our journey.

At

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At Madrid I was received into a merchant's only as a simple shop-boy, because he found me too young to trust me with his books. He likewise took my governante into his service, and by this means we were both relieved from the misery to which we must otherwise have been exposed.

This poor woman died about three years after, and so suddenly, that she had only time to desire me to take some papers, which I would find in her box, and to preserve them carefully. I found in them a pretty particular account of my father's amours, and of my birth, all writ with my mother's own hand. I likewise found some letters which my father had wrote to her when they could not see one another freely. They concerted, in this manner, the measures they were to take to facilitate their meetings. My father, in these writings, had only the name of Don Sebastian. My mother, who, no doubt, did not imagine that she wrote for my instruction, and who had not foreseen that my birth would cost her her life, had neglected to give him the name of Xuarez : nevertheless these memoirs, though imperfect, were my sole resource. The sequel of events had obliged my mother to name in them several of my father's friends, young people and fellow students with him at Salamanca. One of them, particularly,

particularly, seemed to be entirely in his confidence. I took some pains to learn what was become of him ; but did not succeed.

Love at that time came and joined with the other misfortunes that oppressed me. I saw at the merchant's house where I lived, a young person, whose beauty inspired me with a first and strong impression, which can never be effaced. I have so little hopes of success in this unhappy attachment, that I think it needless to give the character of my Mistress, and I shall not even speak of her, but when I cannot avoid it. She was, as to fortune, in my own situation. I made no secret of my condition ; she pitied me, and promised to render me all the services in her power. She made so exact enquiry for Don Antonio (the name of my father's friend) that she discovered his being settled in the Indies. He had served in the Spanish troops with distinction, and at the end of the war they had given him, by way of reward for his services, the government of the province of Santa-Martha in the new kingdom of Grenada. Those who knew him made so large encomiums on his merit, that my Mistress advised me to go to the Indies, persuaded that I should find in him a zealous and generous protector, and that, supposing he were not disposed to do me service, he would at least

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let me know my father's family. I could not resist the desire of making my fortune, as well upon her account as my own, and therefore resolved to go.

Don Antonio received me as he would have received my father himself. I shewed him my papers, which was all I had to prove my birth. It was enough for him. He perfectly remembered my father's writing, that of my mother, and gave me a great many letters from her, which my father had begged he would keep at that time, lest Don Sanchés should find them. He informed me that the name of my family was Xuarez, that my relations were at Madrid, that my father had disappeared the same day of Don Sanchés's death, and that it could never be discovered whither he had fled to conceal his shame, and the remorses of his crime. He promised generously to serve me as a father, and kept me in his own house, where I was treated as if I really had been his son.

Though his lady was no longer young, yet she was still lovely. With a great deal of wit and a very particular care of her person, she had the art of concealing her age, and shewing a great many graces almost as tempting as the allurements of youth. Her husband had a Mistress with whom he mostly lived. His lady had a mind to be revenged,
and

and did me the honour to chuse me to be the instrument. She endeavoured to make me sensible of her choice by particular civilities and attentions, that could not be mistaken. But I loved elsewhere, and I thought all women ought to respect my passion, and even that they did respect it, though I had confided my secret to none. I took notice of this lady's good-will, but I ascribed to the goodness of her character, and to her complaisance for her husband, what had no other motive but love. After having tried, during three months, all the indirect means she could think of, she was at last obliged to make a formal declaration. She knew my condition; she judged that I would never have the boldness to speak to her in the language of a lover, and thereby fail in the respect I owed her, and in the regard to which her husband's generosity bound me. She did therefore what every woman should do, who is by her rank and situation much superior to the man she loves. She sent for me one day that Don Antonio was to be with his Mistress from morning to night. She spoke of my ill fortune in a most obliging manner, and told me I might hope for every thing from her husband's friendship and hers. She asked me if I had left my heart at Madrid. I was ready to confess I had, but she

did not give me time to answer. She told me she had taken notice that I was in love with her. You are wise and prudent, said she; you see with what contempt Don Antonio treats me, pity pleads with you in my favour, and, as you are young, the passage from pity to love is easy; you have however told me nothing of it. Did you think me capable of losing you? No, my dear Mendez, though I did not love you so much as you love me, I would not expose you to the resentment of my husband, by exclaiming against you. Would you not deserve to be pitied for loving without hope?

I perfectly understood the drift of this confession; I threw myself at her feet, and kissed her hand with that vivacity, to which a young man never resists when he finds a proper occasion. I forgot my Mistress, I only thought of the charms that were offered me, and enjoyed them with great pleasure, though procured without any trouble.

The very next day I repented of having taken the advantage of this Lady's kindness. I resolved to see her no more, and my first love possessed me more than ever. I reproached myself with infidelity to my Mistress, ingratitude to Don Antonio, and trembled at the thoughts of the misfortunes to which I exposed myself, were he to discover
my

my intrigue with his wife. He was soon taken up with more important cares. A neighbouring governor gave him a signal affront, and he was making preparations to set out for Lima, in order to demand justice from the Viceroy of the Indies. I laid hold of this occasion to get at a distance, and I begged he would allow me to go upon this expedition in his place, observing that it was proper he should remain in his government. He loved me, believed me, and let me go, recommending to me the care of his honour which depended upon the success of my enterprise. Though I made great diligence, I found, on my arrival at Lima, that I had already adversaries there. The Viceroy was prepossessed against me, it was impossible to doubt of it when I went to pay my court to him, since he received me very coldly, and refused to read a memorial which I presented to him in justification of Don Antonio. The bad success of this first step chagrined me much. I came out from the Viceroy's, and wandered very thoughtful and melancholy in the streets of Lima, without knowing where I went. The sound of a fine voice stopped me in a quarter of that town entirely unknown to me. I remained under a window so long as I heard the same person singing, and the pleasure I enjoyed, soothed my

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pains for a moment. The next day, I went at the same hour under the same balcony, where I heard other airs sung by the same voice.

I loved music, and though very much cast down, could not refuse myself the innocent amusement that chance offered me. I took the advantage of it for five days following: the moment I arrived the lady sung, and it seemed that she only sang to oblige me. The fifth day the window was opened by a person who appeared charming to me; feigning to look with attention on what passed towards the sea, she gave me time to view her at my ease. Afterwards she shut her window, and I was preparing to retire, when a new piece of music stopt me. When it was ended, I perceived at my side a little negro, who made me a sign to follow him. I directly went after him, and walking a long way, found myself at length in a lonely street, where by a little door, I entered into a very fine garden planted with orange-trees and jessamins. When I had made the tour of it my little Black desired me to wait a moment till he went and saw if the coast was clear. About half an hour after, he returned and conducted me towards the house, into which he made me enter by a door so concealed, that I was much surprised to see it, so little appearance was there that

that any such thing could be made in that place. It was covered on the out-side with a pole-hedge garnished with Jessamins, and it must be owned, to the honour of the lady, that these jessamins were in very good order, which proved that the door was not frequently opened. Within the hall it was covered with a picture of the King of Spain at full length, with a large gilt frame round it, which served as a chambranle or door-case, and so exactly concealed the opening, that when I was got in, I could not find it again; but my little negro shewed me the secret, and then went out. As I was alone I amused myself with viewing the tapestry, paintings, and china, all which I found in the French taste and magnificence. The lady, whom I had seen at the window, appeared. Animated beauties excel all others; from the moment of her appearance all other objects were eclipsed, I saw nothing but her, and I saw her beautiful as an Angel. Her arrival surprised me, and she perceived it without displeasure. Sir, said she, I know that by bringing you into my house, I give you perhaps ideas that are not to my advantage. But do not people daily sacrifice some moments of reputation to the pleasure of contenting themselves? I am not afraid of putting myself to day in this case. I remarked that you took plea-

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sure in hearing me sing and even in seeing me; I have often given the same satisfaction to the inhabitants of this place, and I think I am under a greater obligation to do it to strangers. I answered as politely as possible to such distinguished civilities; the collation came, and I was elegantly regaled. Dona Leonora (this was the Lady's name) sung several pretty songs, and her voice appeared more agreeable near than at a distance: it is so with all female singers, when they are pretty and sing before young fellows. When the music ceased, Dona Leonora asked me from whence I came, and what business had brought me to Lima? I told her what I had said to the Viceroy; that I was nephew to Don Antonio, Governor of the province of Santa Martha; that I came to solicit the reparation of an injury which my uncle had received, and that I had no reason to be pleased with the reception I had met with from the Viceroy. She heard me with attention, made me repeat some circumstances which probably I did not well explain, and told me afterwards, Now I understand your affair, take courage, I promise to render you service. I have powerful friends about the Viceroy, I will interest them in your favour. Not that you have any thing to dread; but here, as in Europe, it is better to have good friends

friends than a good cause. Come here tomorrow at the same hour, and we will speak at more length of your affair.

I left the place, charmed to have made so agreeable an acquaintance : her promises did not flatter me much, because we never really depend upon the persons whom we do not esteem ; and the facility, with which I had access to this lady, did not give me a high idea of her Virtue. When I returned to my inn, I ordered my valet to inform himself exactly of the name and quality of the lady from whose house I came. I gave him particular directions, and he had no difficulty in finding it. As no body knew him at Lima, he was not suspected. He learned that this house belonged to Dona Leonora de Gonjalez, a young widow, who was the Viceroy's Mistress. This news did not raise my esteem for Dona Leonora, but it heightened my consideration for her. I easily conceived that her charms were the friends which she had in the Viceroy's Court, and that she could certainly make me gain my process. The next day I dressed myself as magnificently as I could, and went to make my visit to the beautiful Leonora. The little negro waited for me in the street, and conducted me to his mistress the same way he had done before. She was very

richly dressed, and extremely beautiful. She received me with that gay and lively politeness, which the sight of a man whom a woman loves, inspires her with, and on whom her charms seem to have made the impression that she promised to herself. She first spoke of my process, and to prove that she was in a condition to serve me, confessed ingeniously the Viceroy's attachment to her.

In one word, I am his Mistress, said she laughing; and he gives me so generously all I can desire, that I ought to forget all other men to be wholly taken up with the care of paying his benefactions with the most tender acknowledgments. It was thus I acted, but fortune has thrown you in my way to be the cruel disturber of my former tranquility. The Viceroy is old and ugly, you are young and lovely, and I but too sensibly perceive the difference. I had foreseen this flattering compliment: the Spanish Ladies, and particularly those of this species, do not chuse to lose time in spinning out an intrigue, or in settling preliminaries. I answered well, that is to say, I spoke and acted the passionate lover. My transports were so lively, that they surprised Leonora. She was silly enough to check them. I was not in love with her, but I found her charming; I wanted to gain my process, I was
afraid

afraid she would become my enemy, if I appeared to be indifferent ; in fine, I was young, and the opportunity favourable. Motives so powerful are equivalent to love for some moments, but their influence ceases the minute we lose sight of them. Leonora suffered me to speak of the passion with which she had inspired me ; and to tell her that my happiness depended upon her ; her eyes, animated by pleasure, repeated all the gallant expressions that flowed from my tongue, and their language was more lively and tender than mine. I had already taken some of those kisses which are granted by love, and stole from a Mistress. Pleasure had fixed Leonora's eyes on me, a pleasure more lively troubled their lustre, and we both burned with that charming flame which cannot be extinguished but by a mutual assistance. I was ravished with the prospect of conducting her through all the delightful paths of Voluptuousness, and of being participant in the extatic bliss ; but a sudden cloud darkened the smiling scene, the trembling tear hang on her bright eyes, and her arms repelled what they had but a moment before, with fond pressures, attracted, stemming by this unexpected and shocking change the flowing tide of blood, and damping the high animated vigour. In fine, she

got away from me, and chose a corner of the hall as a place of sanctuary against my pursuits ; but I followed her, more surprised than ever I had been in my life. She wept bitterly, but her tears had not the effect on me that might have been expected : the abundance of them made me hope that the source would soon be dried up ; they flowed however for half an hour without interruption. At length she became a little calmer, and threw a tender glance which sliding stole to me : her tears had long before extinguished the fire which animated me, I did not love her, I was surprised, and even angry, with the mortifying disappointment. All this together caused in me a revolution that greatly slackened my first ardour. She was the first that broke silence. Confess, said she, that I am extremely silly ; I love you, and my desires are as strong as yours ; I am within view of the longed-for pleasure, and I recoil when it is in my power to reach it. What caprice of sentiments ! Do you still love me, my dear Mendez ? Can you excuse a woman who combats against her own weakness ? I deceive a man, who has long adored me, for you who are a stranger to me. I forget the Viceroy to think only of you. He loses my heart, of which his services, his generosities, and his love, ought
to

to have secured him the possession, and I bestow it on you for the price of a first homage, in which, perhaps, there enters more politeness, than gratitude or passion. This is the cause of my tears.

Such reasoning seemed to be solid enough, but was this the proper season for it? What woman must she be, who moralises in so critical a moment! her metaphysics appeared to me to be extravagant. But as reflection is an infectious distemper, I began likewise to think. I remembered Don Antonio, and the services which he expected at my hands; this idea roused me again; I forgot that Leonora was almost as ridiculous as beautiful, and I made it a point of honour to baffle her philosophy. She penetrated into my thoughts, and with a very good grace threw herself into my arms. The dread of her reflections was every moment like to stop my career; she perceived it, and encouraged me with the most piquant enticements. At length I brought her into such a situation, that she could no more think of a retreat. Proud then of my triumph, I asked her if she would still weep. No, my dear Mendez, answered she, and then fell a laughing so heartily, and so long, that I was as much wearied with her laughter as with her tears. An idea of extasy had made
her

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her delirious, but she soon recovered out of her fit. My dear Mendez, said she, O how sweet are stolen pleasures ! I deceive the Viceroy, but it is for thee. I love him no more, I give myself to the most lovely man in the world. Can there be any thing so transporting as the pleasure I feel ! Art thou, my dear, as happy as I ? No. . . . Thou knowest not how delicious it is to be unfaithful in thy arms . . . Thou knowest not the inestimable value of thy fondness, of one of thy amorous glances.

She said a great many more rapturous things, which I did not distinctly conceive, because there are certain things which every one is not capable of performing with such a singular presence of mind. I passed near three hours with this indefatigably loquacious lady. She spoke, and I acted, or, rather, we both acted, for she was nothing less than insensible. The exercise of her tongue was a pleasure she enjoyed more than I, and this ridicule was, no doubt, in her a refinement of Voluptuousness.

The very same evening she recommended my affair to the Viceroy. She told him I was her cousin, and that she lay under essential obligations to my father, and to Don Antonio. The good man promised whatever she desired, and as he loved her passionately,
his

his promises were sincere. I was informed next day of this new-modelled parentage that she had contrived to prevent the people of Lima, or the Viceroy himself, from having any suspicions. Every thing succeeded as she had flattered me. However, when she saw my affair ready to be concluded, she made a reflection. In this lay her chief talent. She considered that were my process once judged, I would be gone from Lima to carry the welcome news to Don Antonio. This idea of departure chagrining her, she took measures to retard the judgment, but at the same time took precautions to prevent my adversaries from having any audience of the Viceroy, and that this delay should not in the least be prejudicial to my interest.

The pleasure she took in detaining me at Lima had almost cost me my life. It happens but too often in Spain that when justice cannot be obtained from the Government, some people resolve to do it themselves. My adversaries were in no credit at the Viceroy's Court, who now protected me openly. They made strict enquiry every where to find out who were my protectors, which they at last discovered, and, assured of their bad success, they formed the design of having me assassinated. Leonora, apprehensive of their being prompted to that excess of fury, had
ordered

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ordered me to examine all their steps. This spy discovered the plot. My protectrix immediately informed the Viceroy, who ordered my enemies to be taken into custody, and detained prisoners all the time of my stay at Lima. I began to be heartily tired with it, my good fortune not being able to fix me, I desired nothing so much as the final decision of my process, and I desired it with so much ardour, that I ventured to make mention of it to the fair Leonora; but it was no surprise to her, she suspected my impatience, but did not seem to take notice of it. I told her that Don Antonio was very old, and that I was afraid grief would shorten his days. This supposed old-age made but little impression upon her, and the remedy was as soon found out as the evil: she offered to send an express to dissipate my uncle's fears: I refused my consent to it, under pretence that this attention on my part might be suspected. Very well, said she, we shall send the messenger in the Viceroy's name. In that case, replied I, Don Antonio will believe I am dead or dangerously sick, and this will be a new subject of grief for him. In short, I rejected all the expedients she proposed, giving her always solid reasons to authorise my refusals.

A woman is not beautiful without a tincture of vanity (the ugly are not quite without

out it) Leonora loved me, she thought I must do myself the greatest violence to think of parting with her, and that I could not resolve on it; but that perhaps money was growing scarce with me. She had reason to suspect it, because I had all along been very extravagant. She intimated her doubts, and very generously offered me her purse. I thanked her, and said, I had more money than I should have occasion for, were I to remain two years longer at Lima. I see very plainly, said she, that you are sincere, I ought to be so with you. If I have a mind I can cause you to gain your process to-morrow, but, at the same time, I shall lose mine, since you will leave Lima, with an intention never to see it more. Ah! beautiful Leonora, said I clasping her in my arms, do you think that there is in the whole world a man capable of renouncing the pleasure of seeing you? be persuaded that could I dispense with returning to Santa Martha, I would not stir a foot from you; but that is impossible: Don Antonio is my uncle, I love him as I did my father, and his goodness intitles him to all the paternal rights. I suffer by the bare thoughts of the disquiets that oppress him. Besides, would you be prejudicial to my fortune? It is from him I expect my all. He loves me, he is rich, without

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out children, and proposes to make me his heir, in prejudice of two of my cousins, who have the same pretensions to his succession as I. Give me only the time to go and see him. I will make him understand that the Viceroy is disposed to serve me, and he will give me leave to return here to make my court to him. I shall come back, and put myself under your protection for some post which may authorise my settling at Lima, where, if I am still in your good graces, I shall reckon myself the happiest man upon the earth. The Viceroy is old and infirm, and must, by the course of nature, soon leave this world, and then, if you love me, the gift of your hand may be the reward of my fidelity. Don Antonio will readily consent to our marriage, and we can go and live in his government.

This fine project dazzled Leonora, she embraced me a thousand times, and could not contain the joy with which she was penetrated. My process was judged two days after, and I gained more than I asked. I remained some time longer at Lima for the extract of the Viceroy's sentence, or, rather, to comfort the fair Leonora, who was the more afflicted with my departure, as she saw it approaching. In fine, I bid her a last adieu. She gave me her picture enriched with diamonds, and shewed me mine, which
she

she had got drawn without my perceiving it. I could not excuse myself from accepting, at the same time, a very rich diamond chain, which in the sequel saved my life.

Don Antonio was charmed with the news of my success. He informed me that his wife had been two months dead. I regretted her without reason, for I was by her death freed of a trouble. I had no more business in the Indies, and nothing took up my thoughts more than my return to Madrid, to see there my father's family, and my dear Mistress, whom nothing was ever able to make me forget. I communicated my design to Don Antonio, who offered, if I would remain with him, to look upon me as his son, and to make me as happy as I could reasonably desire. What I propose to you, my dear Mendez, said he, is certain, and nothing more uncertain than what prompts you to go to Madrid. You have the misfortune of being the fruit of debauchery, and of your father's crimes: his loss has, no doubt, plunged his parents into the greatest affliction: the sight of you will open the wound anew, which time has closed. Perhaps (for man is not always just) you may meet with nothing but bad treatment from them. They will lay upon you all the fault of the evils they have suffered, and confounding
con-

consequences with principles, will look upon you as the author of their family's ruin, and of the irregularities of Don Sebastian, though you are really but their fruit. Ah ! Mendez, what grief for you ! What will you do ? What resource can you trust to ? You can require nothing of a family to which, by a settled and undisputable prejudice, you do not belong. Appearances are against you ; believe me, my dear, I know men better than you ; I am almost sure that you will reap nothing from the attempt, but the shame of having made it. But, farther, if the Xuarez's do you no good, they will certainly do you harm. They will make you miscarry in the opportunities which perhaps you may meet with of advancing yourself in the world. Their inhumanity may even extend to have you banished out of Spain, that they may not have before their eyes a man, whose presence will constantly renew their misfortunes. This is the fate that waits for you at Madrid ; it is for this you leave a man who loves you as himself, and who offers to supply the place of friends and parents.

I was so penetrated with the goodness of Don Antonio, that I laid open my heart to him, in which he could read love in large characters. He then changed his style. He consented to my returning to Spain, taking
my

my promise to make no enquiry about my father's family, nor make myself known to any one. He provided me with a ship to carry me to Spain, and we agreed that I should engage my Mistress to come to the Indies, where, in favour of my marriage, Don Antonio would put in my name the greatest part of his immense riches, which would enable me to carry on a great trade, whereof I alone was to reap the profits. As he had gained considerably in his government, he made it appear that he could dispose of all that he had promised me, and that at his death his relations could not pretend to dispute his settlement, nor ask me any thing. I took shipping in hopes of executing this noble project. My voyage was at first prosperous enough, and we were got in view of the Canary Islands, when a privateer got between us and the land and began a combat so furious, that both of us lost a great many men. After we had been in close engagement for above six hours, a squall parted our vessels, so pierced with cannon balls, that they both sunk in sight of one another, without any probability of saving them. A little before ours went down I got into the boat with some of the sailors, and in an instant after I saw the sea swallow up my vessel, with a cargo of merchandise, of which the richness was
pro-

proportioned to the friendship that Don Antonio bore me. I had saved nothing but a letter-case containing some bills of exchange upon bankers at Madrid, the picture of Dona Leonora, and the diamond chain she had given me. Chance had made me put these effects in my pocket that morning, and I thank Heaven that had reserved me still some resource.

My sailors rowed with all their strength to gain the land, which was at a considerable distance from us. In fine, we arrived at a small island where we went on shore. We found in it some Spaniards, who received us well. They told us their ship rode at anchor in a road on the south-side of the island, where they had landed to take in fresh water. The Captain being informed that I was going to Madrid, offered to carry me to Cadiz, where he was to land several merchants whom he had on board. My sailors entered with him, and we set sail about a week after.

We arrived safe at Cadiz. I left the ship, and only kept with me a laquais that Don Antonio had given me; it is the same whom I have brought with me to Paris, and who had been at Lima once before. I negotiated one of my bills of exchange with a Jew, who upon an extravagant discount gave me ready money for it. With this money

ney I fet out for Madrid. I passed through Xerez, Sanlucar, Coronil, and at last came to Seville, where I rested for some days. From Seville I went to Cordoua; I examined the beauties of all the towns where I passed, but my curiosity not agreeing with my impatience to be at Madrid, I resolved to stop no more. I took a guide to conduct me over the mountains of the country of Calatrava, but this wretch had no sooner got us a little advanced on the road, than he found four men of his acquaintance, for whose probity he told me he would be answerable; but he joined with them to rob me. They attacked us in a hollow between two very high mountains. I was well armed and my laquais too. We made a stout resistance, but were forced at last to yield to superior numbers. These robbers took my letter-case and Dona Leonora's picture. They left my cloaths, which were of no great value, and gave me likewise the packet of papers that regarded my family, for which they had no use. One of them said, I must be detained till all my bills of exchange were paid. His advice was approved of by the rest, and I was conducted with my servant into a cavern which had been dug under a rock, where we found a lodging commodious enough, and where no necessities of life were wanting. We
were

were there left under the guard of one of the gang, after being tied opposite to one another with chains made fast to large rings of iron fixed in the sides of the cavern. Our gaoler went out morning and night, returned at the hours of eating, and brought us victuals in abundance. We had each of us an indifferent good bed, and, in short, all we could desire, liberty excepted, but whoever is deprived of that, wants every thing. We must live with all the world; the habit of seeing this robber, and of speaking with him, had by degrees diminished the horror with which his presence ought to have inspired me. I was upon the point of addressing myself to him to furnish us with an opportunity of making our escape. I spoke of it one day to Rodorick (the name of my laquais).

This wretch, said I to him, seems to pity us, I have a mind to tempt him by the hopes of a reward. They have not stript me of all, I have still a costly diamond chain, which I brought from Lima, and with which, at all events, I made a belt next my skin when I left Cadiz. Had my cloaths tempted the robbers, by stripping me they would have found my treasure. I intend to offer it to our guard to engage him to set us at liberty. Rodorick heard me out attentively, and advised me not to make that trial;
for,

for, said he, since we are in the power of highwaymen, our jailor could very easily make himself master of your chain without releasing us. He added, that it was better to keep my secret. I was sensible of the solidity of his reasons, and that I might be no more tempted to give it away, I untied it, and threw it to Rodorick, who concealed it as I had done. In the evening I asked our jailor, when his companions would return from Madrid? He answered, that he did not know, that probably some difficulties were made about the payment of the bills. I told him, that might happen, because they knew not the Indies as I did, and doubtless some questions would be asked; and that, supposing one of them had assumed my name, he could not give them any satisfactory account of the voyage. If it be so, replied the jailor, you die. Fernandez, who is our Captain, will return in great wrath, and revenge himself on you for the disappointment he meets with in the prize he expected. These threats made us tremble; we asked him our lives and liberties, but he was deaf to our prayers, and went to bed very unconcernedly. The next day our solicitations were renewed with more earnestness; he was somewhat moved, and confessed that he would let us make our escape if he durst. We represented to him that he

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might

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might go along with us, and by that means avoid the resentment of his companions : but he told us, he could not, having in a neighbouring village his wife and children, who could not escape the fury of Fernandez. This consideration alone made him inflexible, and we were obliged to prepare ourselves for the worst that might happen. The horrors of death surrounded Rodorick and me, and we were so much dispirited with the weight of our misfortunes, that we could scarce speak, or even look at one another.

One evening our jailor regaled us better than usual, and then told us with an air of confidence : I have occasion for powder and shot. There is a large quantity of both in this place, but I cannot alone open our magazine. A stone of an enormous bigness must be removed ; see which of you two will assist me to do it. I promise you that Fernandez will reward this service upon his return. You must give your word of honour not to attempt making your escape. I think proper to let you know, that you would gain nothing by it, because neither of you can know the windings that lead to the highway. Before day you would fall into the hands of my comrades, who are on guard in the place where you were robbed. We told him all we could think think of to gain his confidence.

confidence. He seemed to be satisfied with our assurances, and after examining both of us, made choice of Rodorick, who seemed to be more vigorous than I. He then went to search in a corner, from whence he brought a key, with which he opened a little padlock that made fast Rodorick's iron belt, and immediately his chain dropt. He followed the jailor, who led him to the extremity of the cavern, where he shewed him a great stone which was to be removed. Each of them had an iron lever; Rodorick feigning that his was too heavy, tried to lift it up, and discharged a stroke on the unhappy wretch's head, who fell, and died an instant after bathed in his blood. On the noise of the stroke I looked that way, and saw Rodorick coming towards me with an air of satisfaction. Let us fly, said he, the jailor is dead. At the same time he took the key that had remained in his padlock, and tried it in mine, but it would not open it. He went to search in the place whence the highwayman had taken this key, and of a great number that he found there was not one that fitted my padlock. He visited, to no purpose, every corner of the cavern; at length, mad with this new misfortune, he laid hold of a weighty smith's hammer, which he perceived in a corner, and having made me approach

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to a jetting piece of rock which served me for a table, he placed the padlock upon it, and at one stroke of the hammer broke it in twenty pieces. The moment I was at liberty we went out of the cavern; but the night being extremely dark, we walked a long time without almost leaving the very spot from which we had set out; so that we returned into the cavern again for fear of being discovered by the light which we carried with us. We past the rest of the night in visiting this den of thieves, which was a complete labyrinth. What prodigious heaps of all sort of things! money, arms, cloaths, diamonds, jewels, toys, and sea provisions of all kinds; in short, every thing that men can have. Rodorick was absolutely for our furnishing ourselves, in this magazine, with whatever we wanted: We took cloaths better than our own, some money and jewels, and each of us two pair of fine pistols. We had neither powder nor shot, we held a council about what we should do with respect to this article. My advice was to buy in the first place we came to. Rodorick observed, that we might be attacked in going out of the cavern, or before we got to the highway, and desired that I would help him to lift the stone which shut the powder-room. This we did; he descended into
this

this subterraneous place, and brought four times as much ammunition as we wanted. He threw the dead body into it, and we then placed the stone as we had found it.

At break of day we left the cavern, and after travelling about an hour reached the highway, which we pursued with great expedition. In the evening, coming out of a little wood, we were attacked by two of Fernandez's gang. Rodorick presented a cocked pistol, and happily prevented their firing by letting fly and killing one of them, whose pistol went off as he was falling. The other took to his heels, and thus we escaped this danger.

The next day we bought horses, and continued our route. Two months captivity had greatly weakened us, which made us frequently rest, and arriving at a little town called Cimpuezelos, pleasantly situated, we resolved to make some stay in it. We took up our quarters in the best inn, and rambled up and down for three days, observing every thing that could excite the curiosity of strangers. On the fourth day in the morning I was arrested by a large body of Alguasils, who, without telling me of what I was accused, dragged me to prison, where I was stript and thrown into a dungeon. In this gloomy cell did I remain fifteen days, in the most cruel uncertainty. At length, I

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was taken out of this sepulchre, and the gaoler told me I was going to appear before my judges. Good God ! said I to myself, judges ? Do they then believe that I am guilty ? What crime have I committed ?

You will be told that, said he, in conducting me to the audience of the Alcade, a tall pale man, whose grave stiffness gave him an air of preciseness, mixed with stupidity, extremely frightful.

A long verbal process was read to me, importing, that I had been arrested for having been found possessed of the cloaths and pistols of Don Louis de Mendoce, lord of a village in the neighbourhood, whom I had assassinated about four months before. Such a dreadful accusation gave me so great a shock, that I fell directly into a swoon, and when I recovered out of it I found myself alone, lying upon a little straw in a garret. I resigned myself to the will of Heaven, but could not help exclaiming bitterly against myself for taking, by Rodorick's advice, the cloaths and arms. Not remembering that the pistols had saved our lives the first day, I thought only of the danger into which they put me of losing it shamefully.

In the mean time Rodorick, who happened not to be at the inn when I was arrested, having been informed of this misfortune on his
return,

return, did all that was possible to get leave to speak with me, but the judge absolutely refused it. However with the assistance of money, and plenty of wine to the gaoler, who loved both, he learned from him one day, that they had stript me of every thing; and next day, the crime of which I was accused; upon which he went to consult an old walking ghost, who was in great reputation for criminal cases, and whose countenance was almost as frightful as the affairs he dealt in. But this spectre was a man of honour and humanity. In a moment his mildness gave poor Roderick courage, who was so struck with the humble and friendly air, and, at the same time, with the profound knowledge of this venerable old man, that he made no difficulty of letting him know every thing that had happened to us since our departure from Lima. The lawyer listened with attention, and then told him, in a solemn and decisive tone, What is most favourable in your affair, child, is the diamond chain, which your master had not about him when he was arrested. If he had been so unlucky to have had it then, it would have gone with the rest, and they would have afterwards hanged him to avoid restitution. You must sacrifice it to purchase this innocent man's life, who otherwise will inevitably perish,

as appearances are strongly against him. Go to the Alcade's, shew the diamonds to his wife as if you had them to sell, and when she asks the price, tell her they are hers if she will procure the liberty of one named Mendez, who is to be condemned to die most unjustly; without other explication. Your master will get out of prison, and this is the best advice I can give you.

Rodorick punctually executed this project. The Alcade's wife was for the diamonds, but he seemed not to consent. She called for one of her people, to whom she spoke in a low voice for some time, and afterwards said to him aloud, Go with the gentleman, and assist the poor prisoner if possible. In the evening I was brought into a chamber near the door of the prison, which was left open; I went out to get a little air, and without knowing where I went, I found myself in the street. A man approached me whom I did not know, and stopt me without saying one word. He gave a whistle, Rodorick appeared, saw me, gave the diamonds, and we went away together. The first place he carried me to was the old lawyer's, to whom we recounted the success of his advice.

I am very well pleased, said he, upon your account; it costs you dear, but that is nothing since your life is safe. Fernandez is taken.

taken. At this word, I cried out, that I would be his accuser, to recover my bills of exchange. Do not attempt any such thing, replied he; you would be sent back to prison, and perhaps your bills would not extricate you so well as your diamonds have done. You are now at liberty, get out of the place this very evening if possible. I thanked this prudent old gentleman for the part he took in my safety, and I made the best of my way, deeply penetrated with the integrity of those gentlemen whom they call Alcades. I had just nothing, and Rodorick very little; nevertheless, as it was important for us to get away from this place, we were unwilling to walk on foot. Necessity however reduced us to that two days after, and I arrived at Madrid as poor as when I left it three years before.

My first care was to enquire for my Mistress, but she had left Madrid. Some told me she was gone to Portugal, and others to France, but none could positively say which. I was more affected with this loss than all my other misfortunes. I was resolved to take a journey to Portugal, but having nothing, I could not undertake it, for which reason there was a necessity of applying to get into some business. One day, as I was going to offer my service to a merchant who knew me, I met with an old friend who had turned Ja-

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cobin Friar during my absence. He made much of me, and begged I would come and see him at his Convent, promising to serve me, if he found any opportunity. People who have no business, are generally fond of making visits. I went to render him mine the very next day. I gave him an account of my voyage, he was sincerely touched with my disasters, and assured me that in some shape or other he would make it his business to assist me. Return here to-morrow, said he, and I will present you to one of our Fathers, who is esteemed by a great many persons of rank. I will prepare him to-day, and you may depend upon a good reception.

I went to the Convent at the hour appointed. I found my friend in the garden with another Monk, whose respectable figure prepossessed me at first sight in his favour. He made me some very polite compliments, that by degrees dissipated a certain timidity with which his presence, notwithstanding his affability, inspired me. You have travelled, Sir, said he, and are not the richer for it, which is no extraordinary case. But you are an honest man, and that is enough to interest us in your favour. I will, with all my heart, render you service, but I must first know you. I have formerly been a traveller myself,
and

and you shall, some time or other, know my adventures, but to-day favour us with your story. In the first place, what family are you of, and who were your parents? Alas! Father, answered I, you ask me a question to which I cannot precisely answer, as I have been unfortunate enough never to know them. I have been told that I belonged to the family of the Xuarez, formerly rich dealers in Madrid. I have no vouchers for this, but a packet of papers, which will not be looked upon as authentic. Xuarez! said he changing colour; ah! child, have you those papers about you? Yes, Father, answered I, presenting him a bag in which they were. He opened it with the greatest precipitation, and so soon as he looked on the first paper that offered to his view, cried out with tears in his eyes, O Heavens! this is Brigitte's writing. He read the little relation which she had committed to paper, and his tears increased as he advanced. Good Father, said the young Friar, lay aside these papers, since the reading of them gives you so much uneasiness. I know the history of my friend; you know then, or have known his parents? Yes, answered he, my dear brother; there are Brigitte's letters, and here are mine, and your friend is my son. I threw myself

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at his feet, and he raised me up embracing me. We remained long clasped in one another's arms, and thereafter he desired to know every thing that had happened to me since my infancy. I narrated what you have now heard. He gave me an account of his travels, the death of his parents, and, in short, his retreat into the order of St. Dominic. I was tempted to imitate his example, but he would not hear of it. He informed me that I had nothing to expect from his family, his parents having given all they had in the world to a man of quality whom they loved. We must see him, said he; he will perhaps be moved with your ill fortune, and endeavour to soften it by giving you what will make you live as an honest man, that is to say, enough to procure the necessaries of life, and too little to support extravagance; this is all I shall ask of him.

My Father introduced me to a great many persons of distinction, who had a regard for him. I was loaded with compliments and presents. About a month after we set out together for France, where he told me we were going to see the Count de Fuentes, the heir of our family, and some other persons whom he knew at Paris. This is my story. You have seen in it a great many turns of fortune,

fortune, a series of misfortunes which have attended me from my cradle, and as I am still young, I have yet time to undergo a great many more.

Nature triumphs since I have had the happiness of finding a father; but Love languishes, and its pains imbitter the pleasures that I should otherwise enjoy.

This young man had made a perfect conquest of me. I wished him all manner of happiness, and sought all occasions to oblige him; I made him my constant companion so soon as I found that my company was agreeable to him. I presented him to all my friends, who received him well at first upon my account, and then for the pleasure of his acquaintance.

I did not find that he had a sufficient relish of the charms of the world, and of high life. I rallied him sometimes upon this head, he answered in a witty manner, but not satisfactory.

I carried him one day to my daughter's Convent with one of my friends. The moment she appeared at the grate, Mendez made a motion which marked the most complete surprise. It was equal in them both, and I was confounded without knowing for what. As women understand dissimulation better

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better than we, Helena recovered first out of her trouble. She asked me news of Madam de Vilmane and some other persons ; she then told me the news of her Convent, and artfully engrossed the conversation so wholly to herself, that I could find no opportunity of turning it upon Mendez, and asking her if she knew him, as in all appearance she did.

We remained in the parlour till the bell rang for supper in the Convent, and then we took leave. In going I told Helena that I suffered greatly by being subjected to the rules of a monastery, and that she ought not to imagine I would permit her to remain much longer in this place. She was accustomed to this language, which I used every time I went to see her. She answered, that I was master, to dispose of her as I thought proper ; and thus we parted.

The pleasure of seeing her, was always new to me ; it made me even forget the dissatisfaction which her obstinacy in retiring from the world gave me. I returned with Mendez to Paris, who said but very little by the way, but I did not take notice of his silence, being obliged to converse with the friend who had accompanied us. When we arrived at Madam de Vilmane's we found a large company, and we had no opportunity of private conversation.

Next.

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Next morning, as I was getting out of bed, I received a letter from my daughter, who begged I would come and see her alone some time that day. I went directly. She came into the parlour with a more lively air than usual. I was the more astonished, as I had no notion of what was in agitation.

I wanted to see you alone, said she, because I am accountable to you, and to none but you, for my conduct. I have seriously reflected on my present, as well as what may probably be my future state, and I find many powerful motives inviting me to a resolution of fixing, either in the world, or in a cloister, my fate for ever. You are my father and benefactor, by these two titles you have an authority over me, which I respect, and which you ought to think me incapable of despising; give me leave to add a third, which is that of my Confident. Your goodness inspires me with courage, and I dread not to declare that Love has pierced my heart; yes, Sir, I love. Are you surpris'd at it? No surely, since you know that Helena is the child of Love.

I had not been long an Actress, when a young man, who lived with a merchant at Madrid, brought some stuffs to our house, which my mother had bought of his master.

He

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He found me alone, he looked at me earnestly, and I returned his looks; I had seen him several times before at the merchant's, we knew one another again, and that instant kindled a mutual passion, which, on my part, death alone can extinguish. We did not see one another for three months after; our hearts waited for the pleasure which the moment of an interview gave us. My lover had no opportunity of speaking to me, but his eyes were faithful interpreters of his heart, and mine, whether I would or not, spoke a language that he well understood. My mother was present, took notice of the impression we made upon one another, and spoke to me of it the same day. She informed herself about my lover, and was told that he had nothing to depend upon but his talents for commerce. She thought solidly, and forbid me expressly to see him. I obeyed, but continued to love him, because I could not do otherwise.

I found my lover wherever I went; it seemed as if love had inspired him with the knowledge of every step I moved. My passion was fed by the pleasure of seeing him, and I daily felt an increase of my love, and of my grief, occasioned by an invincible inclination for one not more favoured by fortune than I was.

So soon as I saw myself my own mistress by the death of my mother, I had not the resolution to refuse myself the satisfaction of seeing my lover. I wished he might be informed of my being now more at liberty; he soon knew it, and came to make his compliments; he had even the generosity to bear a share in the grief which my mother's loss gave me, though she was the only obstacle to his happiness. He spoke to me in so moving a manner of his passion, and drew such a lively picture of the sufferings attached to the constraint in which he had so long languished, and so perfectly resembling the unhappy state in which I had found myself, that it was impossible for me to deny him permission to see me. I was in my own house, and absolute mistress in it; accountable to none for my conduct. Only an Actress of our company, who seemed to love me more than others, out of friendship took upon her to be my governess. She never had been handsome, though she boasted of her charms at the age of fifty. She was the idol of the pretended connoisseurs of Madrid, and of those whom the flights of other Actresses reduced to her society: thus the greatest number were on her side. I was young, brilliant, and very much à-la-mode, so that I gave her umbrage. She rather chose to commit me to the chance of

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of going astray, than to take the trouble of conducting me.

Love, which directs even those who are subjected to the despotic power of their parents, was the principle of all my actions. I indulged myself in every pleasure allowed by virtue. I was an Actress, I had adorers. At Madrid, as at Paris, it is an air to have a woman of the stage, and it is another to have had her. I was constantly teized with those proposals, which have their source in folly and incontinency, and which necessity forces the silly creatures to accept. My refusals piqued, I inspired passions of which the sincerity gave me no concern. My conduct was examined, and it was pretended that I loved mystery without hating pleasure ; but no discovery was made. I was afraid that the assiduous visits of my lover would clear up their doubts, and that his rivals would revenge themselves on him for the rigorous usage they met with. I communicated my embarrass to him, and my resolution of sacrificing all for his sake, and going to live with him any where and in any condition. He had still more probity than love. He confessed that he was without relations, without fortune, and consequently without friends. We deplored one another's misfortune, and with the same breath mutually comforted each other. Love supplied the
place

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place of fortune and birth, and we lived happy, each in their present state, hoping that Heaven would bring about a happy change.

About two years after, my lover left me for some time. He went upon a long voyage to see a man who could inform him who were the authors of his life. I determined him to go, because I hoped he would succeed in this enterprize.

A little time after, Sir, you arrived at Madrid. I had the happiness of finding a father, and the grief of losing a lover. I received no letters from him, which made me conclude that he was dead, for I could not allow myself to think that he was unfaithful. The pleasure of seeing a father, so tender and indulgent as you, softened my grief. I made efforts to persuade myself of my lover's death, and to succeed the better in forgetting him, accepted the proposal you made me of leaving Spain. Since I have been in France, your goodness, and that of Madam de Vilmane, have assisted me to support my misfortune, but they have not been able to destroy my love, though I have seen all appearances opposing my happiness. The world has offered me nothing but insipid amusements, and insupportable cares. I retired here, but my passion has been my constant attendant. I give myself up to it here more peaceably, and it
is

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is this liberty of afflicting myself, which has made me hitherto love retirement. My design was to ask you yesterday permission to live and die here, when coming into the parlour I perceived my lover with you. Yes, Sir, it is he himself. Did you know him, how would you love him ! Has he found out his family ? Has he had any success in the world ? Is it me he seeks at Paris ? O, Sir ! let love plead my excuse for the vivacity of so many questions, and be so good as to answer them. If I am your daughter, and if you love me you ought to be sensible how cruel the uncertainty is that I lie under.

I could not hinder myself from being extremely affected with what I had heard, and after telling Helena all that I knew about Mendez, concluded with a promise that she should be made happy with her lover, on condition that she gave me time to withdraw the word I had given to Monsieur de Fuentés for his son. This assurance made her shed tears of joy in the triumph of her passion, and I could not refuse mine to the pleasure I felt in making so lovely a daughter happy, whose taste for a convent had made me look upon her as lost to me.

I laid hold of this moment to propose her appearing again in the world. It was not without

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without reluctance that she consented, and only asked me the liberty to remain in the convent as long as was necessary to be ascertained of her lover's fidelity. I could not disapprove of this precaution, which she took with an air so calm and satisfied, that I had ground to believe she still thought herself sure of wholly possessing Mendez's heart. I returned to Paris very well satisfied with my journey. I went straight to Madam de Vilmane's; but she was gone out. I returned home, where not finding Mendez, I was deprived of the pleasure of imparting my joy to the persons who were most interested in it.

I dined that day with one of the most ostentatious million-men in Paris. I went there about half an hour after one, the company was brilliant, and choice, though numerous. There were military men, women of the *good tone*, and which is worse, wits. The entertainment was sumptuous, every body praised the cook (it is at Paris a manner of praising the master) the Officers in shrugging up their shoulders, the women in making faces, and the authors in eating. The master of the house spoke of gold, or said nothing. His wife looked at him with pity, and answered to all the compliments, with that half modesty that marks a desire of praise. About the middle of the entertainment, the women left

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left off eating, and began the language of the eyes. The wits took up the conversation, and brought upon the carpet a fatirical idea against an author, who was at that time admired and detested by every body ; they tossed him from one to the other so rudely, that the poor man found himself at the end of this play quite stripped of all his merit, and very much ashamed. The most self-conceited among them, that is to say, the least capable, would not upon any consideration have been the author of any one of the performances which they criticised. Their criticisms were much of a piece with ours ; they gave this name to that heap of injurious invectives which they throw on the works, the person, and the conduct of a man, who has often no other fault but that of possessing talents superior to those of his censurers. Monsieur Miellon was the only person who was silent, some body took notice of it, and was the dupe of his modesty. A lady made a gallant push at him, he answered by grimaces and bows, of which the very-affected modesty diverted the whole company, but it was for a very short time. No sooner was his tongue untied than he fatigued all round him with his flat and stupid encomiums, from the master who gave him his dinner, to the footman who filled his glass. We despised
Monsieur

Monfieur de Miellon enough to let him fay on, and our whole refentment fell upon the lady, who had made him fpeak. She was young and pretty, ſhe permitted every body to tell her ſo, and ſome particular friends to prove it by demonſtration. I knew her, and her ſtory, I whiſpered two words to a certain Cauſtic who fat by me, and he gueſſed at the reſt. He opened upon her full mouthed, which greatly diverted every body preſent, except the lady herſelf. She was angry at firſt, but afterwards took courage, and defended herſelf by confeſſing more than ſhe was accused of. In this manner ſhe ſtopped the mouth of calumny. Her adverſary was diſconcerted, and on riſing from table every one declared for her. I give this receipt to thoſe of the ſex who chuſe to make uſe of it.

I went from thence to Madam de Vilmane's, where I was agreeably ſurprized to find Mendez and Helena. She threw herſelf at my feet, and asked me permiſſion to marry her lover. Mendez did the ſame; I made them both get up, embracing firſt one and then the other. I enjoyed the pleaſure of being a father, and of having it in my power to make my daughter happy. I was ſo wrapt up in this idea, that I was at a loſs where to begin to let them know that I deſired nothing ſo much as their marriage.

It

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It was that moment determined by Madam de Vilmane, who guessed what passed in my heart. Verforand, said she, I know you ; you are too honest a man, and too good a father to gainsay me. Were you capable of it I would never see you more. Helena is your daughter, she is rich, since she is worthy of all your tenderness. Her merit, and your probity, entitle her to your succession. Monsieur Mendez has not a fortune ; it is a loss for him, but an advantage for you, since his ill fortune furnishes you with an occasion of being generous, and making Helena doubly happy. These are my sentiments, you ought to have the same ; and I will not have you to think otherwise.

A woman, whom a man adores, is always in the right. I approved of every thing that Madam de Vilmane said. She told me that Mendez had come that morning to give her the history of his passion, and to inform her he had found his Mistress in Helena ; that he and she had gone directly to the Convent, where she had been so affected with the pleasure they enjoyed upon finding a mutual fidelity, that she had taken upon her to procure my approbation of their love ; that Helena had told her I was but just gone from thence, and was fully informed and satisfied with every thing ; that, in short, she could

could not suffer them to be any longer separated, and that my daughter, half against, and half with her will, had returned to Paris with them.

I knew my blood in Helena's facility to lose the taste of retirement. In two days she could scarce bear to hear the Convent mentioned. The world took up all her thoughts, all the pleasures were hers if she but shared them with Mendez.

Madam de Vilmane pressed me to conclude this marriage, I desired it, but faintly, I must confess. The idea of taking from my estate what was necessary to make the total establishment of these lovers, chagrined me. My design was to marry Madam de Vilmane, and I did not chuse to put her under the necessity of making my fortune. I even sometimes thought of the children which I might have, and their state made me uneasy. I could not pretend to make Helena rich by giving her what must of right belong to them, and therefore resolved to refuse my consent to this match. Madam de Vilmane, who thought very differently, could not conceive what reasons I had to protract this affair, and I durst not be plain with her. What do you wait for, said she to me one day very seriously? Helena and Mendez love one another, they see one another

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another freely, their pleasures are great, but their desires still greater. You will no doubt find occasions to marry Helena better to your liking. She will perhaps be richer, but she will certainly be less happy. She is at an age when love may be made known without a crime; in one word, it is time to marry her, and it must be to Mendez. Employ the half of your estate in the purchase of a place, which will give your son-in-law a rank in Paris, employment, and a handsome revenue. For the remainder, give it them in lands and houses, and live with them, reserving to yourself a considerable annuity. We are not always young, my dear. An age will come, in which we would be glad to have done good to others, because we stand in need of their services. You have a daughter, whose happy natural disposition promises you great comfort in your old age, and in taking a son-in-law, you will secure a double resource. Besides, probity obliges you to terminate this affair. There is a necessity of preventing extremities, to which a young girl may be carried in the heat of passion, when she is exposed to the solicitations of an agreeable lover.

O Madam, answered I, since you will reason, have at it, I will stand my ground, I warrant you. Helena is my daughter,
agreed;

agreed ; but she is only so by good will. I owe her nothing in this world ; what can she require of me ? Every thing, replied Madam. de Vilmane with warmth ; every thing, if you are an honest man. This flash of vivacity pleased me, but did not persuade me. You think nobly, Madam, answered I ; but in allowing you every thing you advance, I ask permission to put Mendez's affection for my daughter to a fair trial, at least for some time. You propose my giving away my whole estate, with the reserve of a pension. Why should I deprive myself of the means of living, before I know when I am to die ? My father was guilty of this imprudence, and I know the inconveniences he would have been put to, on the part of my brother, had he died six months later. When a father gives his estate to his children, he puts them in the case of wishing for his death. I do not chuse this ; it is better Helena should depend upon me, than I on her. As to your fears for the consequences of her passion for Mendez, my answer is, that I have a better opinion of her than you. If I am deceived, I shall make myself easy, by thinking that as she only belongs to me by free good-will, her faults cannot recoil upon me. The laws make me rid of her whenever I think proper. The laws,

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replied this Lady, forbade your debauching her mother ; you forgot them then, and now call them in to your assistance, to deprive a charming daughter of your succession. It is her whom you want to punish for the crimes you committed before she was born. Could you reflect on the motives of those same laws that degrade natural children, you would be sensible they were only established to bridle the immoderate tenderness which fathers have but too often for children born out of marriage, even to the prejudice of their legitimate offspring.

Sentiments so generous charmed me. I was sensible of my mistakes, and confessed them. Madam de Vilmane was highly pleased with her victory. She embraced me, and by a thousand delicious kisses we mutually proved the joy we felt, she to have persuaded me, and I for her shewing me what was reasonable and generous. Her easy chair was by accident like to have been overturned, she got up, and, without perceiving how, fell upon a sofa, where we enjoyed pleasures of which my irresolution deprived Helena and Mendez.

An unforeseen accident put a stop to their marriage ; it was the unhappy death of my brother Dulemont at G***, which I learned from one of his people who came to acquaint me with this melancholy news.

I took

I took post directly, to go and take possession of the succession. Mendez wanted to accompany me, and Helena joined with him to obtain my permission, which I at length granted, promising my daughter to bring back her lover as soon as possible. We went to G****, where my first care was to be informed of the manner of my brother's death, but all I could learn was, that he had been found dead, with several stabs in his body, in the middle of the great square, without even the least suspicion of the authors.

As I had a great many servants, they judged that I had money in proportion, and occasions were offered me to expend it. The people of the law told me, that if I would take proper measures, I should certainly discover my brother's murderer.

They gave this advice with such a disinterested air of gravity, that I swallowed the bait. There are evils from which we can never guard ourselves, and snares into which we fall, though we know the danger of them. Such were the civilities of the Magistracy of G****. I was dazzled with them, I opened my purse, which was soon empty. When they thought I was growing weary with giving out, they brought me, in exchange for above two hundred louis d'ors, an enormous heap of papers, which in four days I

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made a shift to read. In the whole I learned nothing but that they did not know who had killed my brother. Disgusted with perquisitions of no use, I wanted to put a stop to them, but they had the address to prevent that, and it cost me as much to break off all commerce with the officers of justice, as I had expended in seeing them at first.

I was at length extricated, and went to one of my brother's estates, four leagues from G****, on which he had laid out a great deal of money. I found it so beautiful, that I did myself a pleasure in bestowing it upon Mendez, being resolved not to take any of my brother's effects, which were considerable, for my own use. According to a schedule which he had left of his estate, it still amounted, notwithstanding all the follies he had been guilty of, to more than thirty thousand livres a year, and fifty thousand crowns in ready gold. I did not conceal my riches on my return to G****, and I was much to blame. The gentlemen of the law, awaked by this brilliant news, recommenced the process, without so much as acquainting me. Two days after I received the following billet.

A person, whom you know, Sir, is desirous of having a private conference with you upon an affair that interests both. It is of the last importance

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importance that our meeting be kept a secret. Give your day, and hour, and be persuaded that Clemency is the brightest of all the Virtues.

This billet was not subscribed by any name, and the hand was absolutely unknown to me. I was at a loss what to think of it, but as I am the man in the world, who least loves to keep people in suspense, I sent word that the person might come directly. I shewed this billet to Mendez, who could make as little of it as I. He knew nearly all that had happened to me; neither of us however could guess from whom we were going to receive a visit.

We waited till the evening. At length appeared a woman, who, after my footman was retired, and the door of my chamber shut, threw herself at my feet asking mercy. I stretched out my hand to her, which she wet with tears. The bare sound of her voice threw me into a disorder which I could not account for. In getting up, she let fall a handkerchief with which she concealed her face, and I immediately knew in her the beautiful Javotte. One of her glances re-kindled in my heart all my former love, but the same instant extinguished it. All misfortunes seem to be renewed on the sight of the object who has been the occasion of them. The desire of revenge is so natural, that man cannot hinder it from springing in his heart:

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happy

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happy is he who has a soul capable of being sensible that it is mean to punish, and noble to forgive ! Mendez read in my eyes that my heart was strangely agitated. He said such moving things on Clemency in general (for he did not know Javotte) that the black vapour which overspread my mind upon the sight of her, was by degrees dissipated, and I had at length resolution enough to calm my rage, and to pity this afflicted fair One, without knowing the occasion of her grief. We all three recovered out of our confusion. I asked Javotte a great many questions, and she answered me in this manner.

I know, Sir, that I ought to expect nothing from you but indignation and contempt, and yet I come to ask you a favour. You will not readily grant it, though the consequence of a denial must be unavoidable death to me. I left you when the few accomplishments which Nature had bestowed on me, rendered me necessary to your pleasures. I loved you, Sir, but I loved my honour more, of which you wanted to bereave me, sometimes by violence, and sometimes by soft and polite intreaties, which would have at last seduced me. I thanked heaven for furnishing me with an occasion of leaving your house, and I thought I should have rendered myself unworthy of its protection, if, by returning,

I ex-

I exposed myself to the danger from which, by its goodness, I had escaped. I went and threw myself at the feet of several Prioresses of Convents, begging to be taken in and protected against the persecutions of my parents and of you; they all pitied me, but none of them would receive me. A very virtuous lady lived in the neighbourhood of my father, I had heard much of her generosity; the praises that were given her made me imagine she would take pity on me. I went, and on my knees implored her protection. She received me with goodness and took me into her house, from whence I did not stir for more than two months.

I was young, retirement began to be tiresome, I confessed it to my benefactrix, who had the complaisance to carry me with her to the country. My parents, having somehow or other discovered where I was, came and brought me home, where I was shut up in a chamber, seeing no body but my mother and the Abbé Ramy, whose passion exposed my Virtue to severe trials. It is needless to trouble you with a particular account of my sufferings, which would not excite your compassion; you are too strongly prepossessed against me by the remembrance of those troubles you have undergone, and of which I was the innocent cause.

M 5

I could

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I could see no way to be delivered from this horrid captivity, and I was beginning to conclude that I must pass my whole life in it, when an Exempt, followed by a great many assistants, came and carried me away, by the King's authority. His sight gave me no disturbance. I saw plainly enough that I was not going to be set at liberty, I could only hope for a change of prison and of punishment. I already suffered much, I imagined that I should suffer less in my new prison, and in that notion rejoiced at what every one looks upon as a misfortune. I was conducted to the Convent of D****, where I enjoyed all the pleasures that prisoners are capable of; that is to say, was treated with mildness, was allowed all sorts of amusements, and relished none.

When one is depressed with misfortunes, and our unhappiness seems to reach its last period, we sigh for some event to diminish it, and scarce is it arrived, when we long for something still better. I thanked the Abbess for the many instances of her goodness to me; she was pleased to see me content, and had the imprudence to tell me that I should pass my whole life with her. The idea of a perpetual captivity made every joint of me to shake. This obliging Lady perceived it, and promised to use her utmost endeavours with
the

the Ministry to procure my liberty. I waited long, and had at last the satisfaction to find that my hopes were not vain. You was so generous, Sir, as to employ your interest for me, and in a little time the Lady Abbess received an order for my discharge. She called me into her chamber, where I learned from her the detail of all the horrors which my flight had occasioned, the action which my parents had brought against you, your journey to Spain, your return, and in short what cause you had to detest me.

I possessed nothing but my liberty, and yet I thought myself happy. When I resolved to take the benefit of it, I found myself very much at a loss. What could I do in the world where I had neither friends nor acquaintances? I applied to the Lady Abbess for permission to stay with her, she granted my request, and had the goodness to subject me to none in the Convent but herself.

I went often with her to the parlour, where I had an opportunity of seeing her relations, her friends, and, in short, all who came to visit her. The greatest number was merchants of all kinds, because that lady took a particular pleasure in viewing stuffs and toys. One named Banel, a famous trader, came to settle in that town. He soon was admitted to pay his court to the Lady Abbess,

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and he made frequent visits; he saw me, loved me, and offered to give me by contract of marriage all he possessed. My benefactrix was charmed to find this occasion of making my fortune. My father was dead, she wrote to my mother, who sent her consent; and three months after I was married to Banel. By this marriage I found myself extremely rich, I assisted my mother who had great occasion, but I would not consent to see her.

All my husband's trade was with England, Portugal, and America. We lived for some time in the condition of two persons of whom love and fortune constitute the happiness. But alas! are there changes so terrible as those that accompany poverty? Into what confusion does it not throw a mind endowed with the greatest firmness! how many men are drove, by necessity, to commit actions that they detested before they knew indigence!

The hopes of making at once a brilliant fortune, tempted Banel to take the advantage of a favourable opportunity of sending a large adventure to America. Three ships went out loaded with French merchandise; they carried our whole fortune, and that of two other merchants. They were to bring back to Europe sugar, coffee, and other valuable commodities, on which great profits were expected. All the three were lost; and from
that

that moment commenced our misfortune. So soon as this melancholy news was known, all those with whom we dealt, made demands. We were obliged to sell some lands and houses, which my husband had purchased, so that we had nothing now remaining but a little house very indifferent, to which we retired. Our love still continued, we were still happy. Our reciprocal tenderness made us devour the bitterness of our griefs, to conceal them from one another.

A great many men had thought me handsome, and told me so, but as I always gave them a bad reception, they desisted. Our misfortunes gave new life to their passions. They thought I would purchase, at the expence of my Honour, the necessaries of which I stood in need. They made me offers of all kinds. I rejected them with the same haughtiness that I could have done had I been ever so opulent. My dear Banel was so affected with my fidelity that he thought no more of the riches he had possessed, and was only taken up with the pleasure of seeing and loving me.

Among those who wished me well, Monsieur Dulemont particularly distinguished himself by his assiduities, his eager solicitations, and his brilliant proposals. As he knew nothing of the events of my younger days, he did not think I knew him. He came to make

us a visit in our retirement, sympathised with us, offered us his purse, and insisted on our going to live with him at his seat four leagues from this, now yours. He chose the hours when I was alone to come and talk to me of his love, and constantly asked permission to enrich me. At length, his assiduities displeased me so much, that I forbade his coming any more to our house. He employed an Attorney of G****, who was steward of his estate, to speak to me in his favour, and this fellow importuned me to such a degree, that I determined to discover to Banel M. Dulemont's passion, and what means he made use of to succeed in it, that he might let me know what he would have me do. One evening our conversation fell upon the happiness which he enjoyed. It is not, my dear Banel, said I, so great as I desire it; you may believe me. I love you, and I never shall love any other; but pray, since my love gives you so much pleasure, rid me of the importunities of Monsieur Dulemont, who employs the most pressing solicitations to prevail with me to make him happy.

Banel seemed to listen to what I said very calmly, and even appeared not much disposed to answer me. But he enjoyed the whole extent of his felicity; he thought I loved none but him, and that I preferred the pleasure

sure of comforting him, of bewailing his misfortunes, and of sharing them with him, to that of forgetting them. He threw himself into my arms, covered my face with tears that joy made him shed, launched out into excessive praises of my fidelity, and even thanked me as people do when they receive a favour they did not expect. Dear Javotte, said he, your virtue renders me the happiest of men. I have neither orders, nor advice, to give you on the present occasion. Conduct yourself as you shall think proper, I am sure of you, and this charming certainty makes me quite easy. I was not satisfied with an answer so indefinite; I insisted, Banel fell into a deep meditation, and at length addressed me in the following manner.

You see, said he, to what a melancholy condition we are reduced. We have neither money nor resources, no more friends; are there any for the wretched? In this terrible situation, is it not allowable to try every expedient to draw us out of the misery with which we are oppressed? Be a little complaisant to Monsieur Dulemont; speak to him, even promise to gratify his desires, and be afraid of nothing.

I had already thought of this stratagem, but the dread of giving Banel a bad opinion of my virtue, had made me lay it aside; when
I saw

I saw that he and I agreed in our ideas, I cheerfully obeyed him.

Monfieur Dulemont being always fure to go where he had any hopes of feeing me, it was no difficult matter to give him an opportunity of fpeaking to me. I heard him with more patience than ufual ; he was charmed ; he offered me money ; I confented to take it, and I actually received ten louis. The fum was immense for me, though but a trifle for him : he intended, by giving me little, to put me under the neceffity of granting him the laft favour, for which he promifed a thoufand louis. I made a faithful report to my hufband of every thing that paffed, who about a month after permitted me to give this generous lover a rendezvous. The day and hour were fixed, and Monfieur Dulemont was exact. There is your part, faid he, placing a bag of gold upon my chimney ; and here is mine, purfued he, taking me in his arms. I endeavoured to get away from him, but to no purpofe. I gave a fhriek, which made Banel come out of a corner where he was concealed. He laid hold of the bag, and then told Monfieur Dulemont, whose transports were cooled by his prefence, what a hufband has a right to fay who catches his wife as it were in the fact. I had alfo my fhare of his feigned wrath, he threatened to kill me. At
this.

this word your brother presented a pistol. Banel had the hardiness to lay hold of it, and the good fortune to pull it out of his hand. This lover, furious to have lost an occasion which he thought so favourable, threatened to kill my husband, if he did not leave the house directly. Banel was highly enraged with the proposal, and being resolved not to give me up to his immoderate desires, returned him the compliment; upon which your brother pulled out a dagger, and flew at my husband, who once more disarmed him, but not before he had received some wounds, which rendering him as furious as the other, he plunged the bloody weapon in the unfortunate Dulemont's breast, who fell dead at his feet. You are his brother, Sir, do you desire the murderer should satisfy, with the loss of life, your just revenge? Here I am, deliver me over to justice: this is the favour I came to ask of you.

Here Javotte left off speaking. She waited for my answer with down-cast eyes, and yet with a tranquility that astonished me. Mendez remarked that I was less touched with the misfortune of this lovely person than he had hoped; he spoke for me. Fear nothing, said he; Monsieur de Verforand is not unjust, he pardons you. This answer, so contrary to what then passed in my heart, drew

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drew me out of the perplexity in which I felt myself. Pardon her ! Sir, said I in a rage : What do you mean ? Pardon a woman to whom I have done all the service in my power, and who, as a reward of my goodness, exposed me to the loss of my estate, my honour, and even of my life, and who crowns all by the murder of my brother ! Let her perish. No, replied Mendez with vivacity ; no, my dear Papa, I cannot bear that you shall be for her so different from yourself. What have you to lay to her charge ? Nothing ; she left you because she was virtuous ; the many evils you were exposed to upon her account, were without her consent, and even without her knowledge. And you, have you not been the cause of all the hardships she has undergone in her father's house, in the convent, and her long captivity in both ? In fine, you reproach her with the death of your brother ; is it more or less than to upbraid her for being virtuous, and for loving her husband ? Your brother was a madman who precipitated himself into the abyss in which he perished. He has been punished by the event of the crime which he meditated ; this tender couple ought to move your compassion and generosity. Can you be so unjust to find fault with this woman's being attached to her husband ? She might have

have avoided laying this trap for your brother, that is true ; but did she know that it would be the means of his death ? And ought we not to forgive indigence for trying every expedient to procure some relief ? Alas ! what is revenge ? A moment of pleasure, followed by an age of remorse. For when a man is wicked enough to be the author of another's misfortune, he ought for ever to reproach himself with it. If you forget yourself so far to punish the unfortunate Banel, you will by so doing confess that you deserved all the evils of which you complain. The noblest way of revenge, is to be silent, and to do as much good to our enemies as they intended evil. We must be satisfied with making them dread the punishment of an injury, without their ever feeling it.

Mendez spoke with fire, reasoned justly, and persuaded me. I raised Javotte, who had still remained on her knees without my perceiving it ; she presented the bag of gold, but I returned it to her, and promised to stop all farther prosecution upon account of my brother's death. Alas ! Sir, said she, that is more than I could have expected from you, but it is not sufficient for me. You are a stranger to the Justice of this country, it acts continually, and most often whether the parties will or not. No one knows that
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my husband had the misfortune to kill Monsieur Dulemont, but we are poor, the least idea of suspicion would be sufficient to ruin us. To make her easy upon this head, I told her that I would next day stop all proceedings, and declare null what might be done in my name for the future. She thanked me with such an air of sincere acknowledgment and satisfaction, that I could not help being sensible of the pleasure I had done her. Now that your fears are quieted, said Mendez to her, let us know how the body of Monsieur Dulemont, who was killed in your house, could be found in the great square without any one's knowing from whence it was brought. Sir, answered she, we are in misery, we see no company, no body takes notice of what passes in our house, and the solitary manner in which we live was very favourable upon this occasion; because it was not known that Monsieur Dulemont had made us a visit, it being the dusk of the evening when he came. Though my husband was but slightly wounded, he was obliged, however, to go to bed, and I acted the part of a Surgeon. I then began to ruminate how we should dispose of the corpse. Necessity gave me strength and courage, and at midnight I loaded my shoulders with the body, and carried it to the middle
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of the square, about a hundred and fifty paces from our house ; this done, I returned quietly home, and, by good luck, unseen by any one, which is a thing not at all extraordinary in this town, when there happens to be none of the military in it. I had not time to give Banel an account of my success. What with the pleasure of saving the life of a husband so dear to me, the horror of the load I had carried on my back, the fatigue of its weight, and, in short, the dread of being discovered with which I had been hitherto agitated ; all these put together made me swoon away at the bed-side.

The next day my husband got up, and appeared in the town as usual, and so did I. We expressed great surprise on hearing the news of Monsieur Dulemont's murder, and no body suspected us of being the authors. My husband having nothing more to fear, his wounds were cured in a very little time, and we soon enjoyed that delicious calm which succeeds great alarms.

On the arrival of Monsieur de Verforand, such strict enquiries were made, that I was afraid they would at last discover what we had so great interest to conceal. We were long kept in suspense by the dread of this misfortune, and the hopes of avoiding it. At length fear got the mastery in my mind,
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and I came to a resolution of imploring the gentleman's clemency, in letting him know the particulars of his brother's death.

I kept my word with the lovely Javotte, by giving her next day the desist from my process, and I advised her to go to Paris, where I procured an employment for her husband, which put him in a condition to live honourably. Their love was durable, and death alone, by carrying off Banel, dissolved the happy union. Javotte, for two years, mourned for the loss of her beloved spouse; and grief throwing her into a languishing distemper, it soon put a close to a comfortless life. Thus died the most virtuous woman I ever in my life met with.

So soon as I returned to Paris, I concluded the marriage of Mendez with Helena, and gave them all my brother's fortune. My son-in-law bought a Financer's post to give him a rank in the world, and we were all happy; these tender lovers in the accomplishment of their desires, and I in making their fortune.

I had some difficulty in compromising matters with Monsieur de Fuentés, to whom I had engaged my word in favour of his son; but at length, by the solicitations of Madam de Vilmane, and perhaps by the hopes of preserving the whole of the Xuarez estate to his

his son, he relinquished his pretensions to the match that had been agreed on betwixt him and me.

The young Fuentés had at first pleased me, and my esteem augmenting more and more, I could not easily resolve on cutting off all his hopes by marrying my daughter to Mendez. But Helena looked upon him as a man not much to be esteemed, she had told me so several times; an unhappy event justified her conjectures, and greatly mortified my self-love in esteeming myself a judge of men.

The Count de Fuentés came one evening to ask my advice how he should behave. The Marquis his son was passionately fond of gaming; his father had already paid above a hundred thousand livres for him, and was informed that he had larger concealed debts. I told him that it was no easy matter to advise him in affairs so delicate, and that he himself was the only proper person to determine what he ought to do. I had scarce spoke the word, when a servant came in and told us, that this unhappy young gentleman was just brought home dangerously wounded, and without signs of life. We ran directly to his chamber, where a Surgeon was dressing his wounds, which he found dangerous, and in going out, said it would be a miracle if he recovered,

recovered, desiring that he might be kept very quiet and not allowed to speak.

It was with great difficulty his father and mother obeyed this order; I judged of their grief by what friendship made me feel for their son. Madam de Vilmane arrived; her wit was delicate and sprightly: she spoke so many good things to quiet the afflicted parents, that if they had not the strength to follow her advices, they at least listened to them. It is all that is necessary in these cruel moments, where the question is only to gain time. We did not as yet know how the Marquis had met with this misfortune. Madam de Vilmane desired that his people might be called. Only one footman had attended him that day, who being likewise wounded, we were obliged to go to his chamber. He informed us that his master had passed the day at a woman's house who kept a gaming-table; that he had gained five hundred louis, and that coming from thence on foot, four men attacked him with drawn swords at the corner of a street; that he had defended himself vigorously, but that notwithstanding his resistance, they were going to rob him, when they discovered two runners with flambeaux before a coach coming our way; that they made their escape, leaving the Marquis lying on the ground, and bathed in blood with
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the many wounds he had received. This poor lad added, that, in attempting to save his master, he had been run twice through the arm, and had his fingers mangled in endeavouring to seize on the swords.

What recital for the father and mother of an only son ! I passed the night with them, as did Madam de Vilmane, and it was she who notified to them that they had no more a son. He died at five in the morning, or, rather, at that hour it was perceived that he ceased to breathe, for he had given scarce any sign of life since the hour of the combat.

Monsieur and Madam de Fuentes left their house directly, and went into the country with Madam de Vilmane, my daughter, and her husband. I thought it my duty to stay, to give the necessary orders for their son's interment, and to prepare informations against his murderers. I found in his pockets the 500 louis d'ors, and several papers which his death gave me a right to examine, to see if he left no affairs good or bad. I discovered, by some letters, that he had a Mistress, whom he kept, since she asked him money for domestic expences, which none but the master of the house ought to be privy to.

In the afternoon I received a visit from a very honest usurer, who told me that the Marquis owed him two hundred thousand

livres, which he had lent him. I desired to see his title, and he presented me a note in due form, which made me very uneasy. I made the lender observe that the young man died in his twenty third year, and that being under age, he could not engage himself for so considerable a sum without the consent of his parents. He shook his head, and left me, saying as he went out, that he would find a way to get his money, and that he must speak to the father of his debtor. I took his name and direction, and being uneasy with his threats, went that very evening to Monsieur de Fuentés's country house. He was a passionate man, and used some unguarded expressions against the French Government for permitting Usurers, and raved as much as if there had been no such vermin in Spain.

Next day he sent a man on horseback early to the Usurer, desiring he would meet him at his house in town, about twelve o'clock, and we returned to Paris without my knowing for what, but I was no longer at a loss when I perceived the Usurer who waited for us in the court. Come, Sir, said the Count with a Spanish gravity (on being informed who he was) have you got my son's note about you? He answered, Yes. So much the better, replied Fuentés with an easy calm air that astonished me. We all three went into a closet
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looked into the garden, and the Count, after shutting the door, desired to see the note, which he read two or three times, and then returned it, saying very seriously, Well now, Sir, how much must I give you for this note? The Usurer fell a laughing, but did not laugh long. His debtor assumed all of a sudden an air of fury, and after a great many injurious reproaches, said to him,

I will give you immediately ten thousand livres, and you shall give me up this note, or you shall not have a farthing, and I will have you hanged to-morrow; take your choice.

I admired with what gravity he made his proposal, and I well expected to see it refused, as in effect it was. Monsieur Fuentes opened the door, and ordered his people to bring a couple of good sticks, which they were to break on the back of this honest man. The domestics were Spaniards, devoted to their master, and obedient to his command. The poor Usurer fell on his knees, and conjured us with tears in his eyes not to kill him; but I had no power, and Monsieur de Fuentes no ears.

When the sticks were brought, he told this Martyr of Avarice, Honest friend, I do not intend that you should be killed, but it is not just that I pay you two hundred thousand livres, which I owe you not, with-

out punishing you for robbing me, in lending my son money. Here is then the expedient that I have thought of to make us both content. So many pistoles as you ask me, so many strokes you shall receive: if you will have your shoulders spared, it will be so much gained to me. Come, Sir, said he to me, sitting down, assist me to count my money.

At the very instant two stout fellows laid hold of the poor patient, and two others began the operation. Money does every thing. This wretch, who appeared to be about sixty, had the courage to receive two hundred strokes well applied. The pain he felt had so weakened him that he could no longer support himself. Those who had first seized him, were obliged to bear him up. I interceded for him, and Monsieur de Fuentés ordered a short respite, asking if he had got enough.

Alas! Sir, replied the poor man, my life is in your hands, for the love of God have pity on me. Here is your note, which I return to you. His judge was not satisfied with that. He made him give a writing, wherein he acknowledged his having received two hundred thousand livres by him lent to the late Marquis de Fuentés, declaring that he had no farther demands upon him, his heirs, or successors; and all titles null that
he

he, or any belonging to him, could now, or at any time, produce.

All this done, he was put into the Count's coach, who conducted him home very politely himself, and at parting gave him the five hundred louis which the Marquis had gained at play two days before.

We are got rid of him, said he on his coming back about a quarter of an hour after: let the sticks be kept to pay others, if any should appear. We returned to the country, where we gave an account of our expedition. Madam de Vilmane started objections without number, and made Monsieur de Fuentés at last almost afraid of what he had done, it being very natural to think that a man, whom he had caused to be almost assassinated in his own house, and who was so great a loser besides, would endeavour to indemnify himself, if possible, by a prosecution: but we were all more afraid than hurt, for we heard no more of the matter.

The silence of the Usurer made Monsieur de Fuentés observe that he had found out an excellent way of paying debts. Advertisement to the quality who pay Usurers, and ruin honest tradesmen.

The death of the Marquis opened my eyes with respect to my daughter's aversion to him.

I confessed to her, in the sequel, that I was glad she had resisted me when I wanted her to accept of this heedless young man for her husband.

Mendez took such part in the Count and his Lady's grief, that he gained their friendship, and managed so well, that he made them easy under their loss. He became soon as dear to them as a child, and they looked upon him as such, in making him heir to their whole estate, by which means he recovered the succession of his forefathers.

When he saw himself master of so brilliant a fortune (which happened the following year by the death of his benefactors) he proposed to give me back my brother's estate, but I refused his offer, finding myself richer than ever, as I enjoyed the same income which I had in my youth, and spent considerably less.

My daughter, after a great many indirect attempts, at last, in plain language, proposed my marriage with Madam de Vilmane. She had long wanted to be at this; I saw it well; but did not make a merit of my penetration. Content with loving, and being loved, I had no ambition for the title of husband. It is become so fatal to the happiness of man that there were some moments in which I was afraid of Madam de Vilmane's talking of a Priest and a wedding-ring.

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In the mean time, Monsieur and Madam Prevol, my daughter, and son-in-law, sallied out upon me, with Father Sebastian at their head, who in his quality of Fryar was appointed to harrangue me. He made use of arguments drawn from religion, and I listened with attention: though I was at that time far from being devout, and but very little susceptible of scruples, yet I felt, upon this occasion, that solid principles are never to be effaced. I was affected with Father Sebastian's remonstrances, and yielded to them.

Madam de Vilmane had been sounded before upon the match, without my knowledge, and seemed not to be averse to it. We went in a body to her house, where I told her myself what was upon the carpet. You see, Madam, added I, that it is impossible for me to conceal that I adore you. Esteem and gratitude, that ought to attach me to you, are Virtues so little à la-mode that people cannot be persuaded they are the motives of my assiduities. You are charming; it is said I love you. You admit my visits, and they conclude I am in your good graces: even my children have these ideas of us, judge then what may be the opinion of a censorious world that delights in scandal and calumny. We are at our own disposals, we must silence Calumny, and the only effectual

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way to do it is, to seal our vows at the altar, or see one another no more ; pronounce.

This admirable woman was for some time deprived of speech. I saw the tear standing in her eye, which drew its source from the joyful sound of so reasonable a proposal. She expanded her lovely arms, I flew to the kind embrace, and all present shared in the pleasure we were going to taste in publicly owning our love, and our happiness.

In eight days the ceremony of our marriage was solemnised, with all the pomp and magnificence that my daughter, who did the honours, could devise.

I shall perhaps be laughed at as simpleton, but I will nevertheless take upon me to say, that from that day my happiness appeared to be so much the more perfect, as it was more lawful. Pleasures, how great so ever, have their fixed period. Reflections follow close after them, and bring with them repentance, and remorse for irregularities and crimes. What an inward satisfaction does a husband feel when to a graceful form, his wife unites the more noble accomplishments of the heart and mind. He loves, and is beloved by her. Such was the felicity I enjoyed for six years. Madam de Verforand brought me three children, who died in their infancy, as well as four which my daughter had. These
losses

losses did not make us repine, because we were swayed by Reason and Religion. Besides, it was not as yet the mode to be afflicted for want of heirs to support a family often scarce worthy of notice, nor to make bonfires when, by the birth of children, an infamous name stands fair to be perpetuated.

My son-in-law had a Cashier, a young man of a most agreeable figure, whom he had known from his infancy, and whom he had sent for to Spain to be his Clerk. He used him with more civility and goodness than a servant could reasonably expect. His name was Bartholomew. He had seen my daughter at Madrid when she belonged to the play-house, and had fallen in love with her. The retired life she led excluding him from all access to her, he continued to love her, even without the least hopes of ever being happy. When Mendez made him the Confident of his inclination for my daughter, the fear of offending a friend who was useful to him, hindered him from confessing that he was his rival. He sighed in secret, and every time that Mendez gave him an account of the progress of his love, he congratulated him, but suffered all that a man can suffer who sees a treasure, which his heart is fixed upon, and of which he thinks himself alone deserving, fall into another's hands.

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Helena's leaving Madrid was matter of great grief to Bartholomew, but he found a motive of consolation in her being lost to Mendez (then in the Indies) as well as to him.

Time had extinguished this foolish passion, but it rekindled at Paris. His familiarity with Mendez gave him an opportunity of passing the greatest part of his time with her, whom he had seen in Madrid only at a distance. These opportunities made him discover new charms, and his passion encreased more and more.

Nothing is more natural than to believe what we ardently desire. Bartholomew took for marks of affection the civilities which she thought due to a man whom her husband loved. These favourable ideas gave him more assurance. He shut his eyes on what he owed to his benefactor, and on the abyss of misery into which he was going to plunge himself if his enterprize should happen to miscarry, and on the first favourable opportunity declared his love. He took care not to forget telling her, as a merit, that he had been her slave before Mendez. She was so astonished at this discourse, that she did not think of returning an answer. Bartholomew construed her silence as a mark of no dislike, and persuaded that she thought herself obliged to him for his constancy, wanted to lay hold
of

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of the present opportunity to complete his happiness; but he was not so successful in acting as he had been in speaking. Helena got out of his hands, in great rage at his insolence, and flew to her husband's closet to give him an account of this scene; happily for Bartholomew he was not there. She came directly to my house, and Madam de Verforand assisted me to appease her. We made her promise that she would say nothing of it to Mendez, till we should give her notice.

A French husband orders his doors to be shut against a man in the case of Bartholomew; but a Spanish husband lets him come in, and plunges a dagger in his heart. This was what we dreaded, and what we wanted to prevent.

Some days after, I told my son-in-law that I desired he would discharge his cashier. He refused, asking me for what reason I wanted to have him turned off. Madam de Verforand, for whom he had a vast regard, went more artfully to work, and laid hold of a more favourable opportunity, engaging her word of honour that she would let him know the reasons of Bartholomew's disgrace so soon as he was gone for Spain. Mendez was sensible of the tender concern we took in what regarded him; he fancied his cashier robbed

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him, and instead of discharging him openly, gave him a commission to execute in Spain, and two days after his departure wrote to him at Madrid not to return. Bartholomew found the letter on his arrival, and was not to seek for the author of his disgrace, which he bore without complaining. When we were sure that he was got to Madrid, his crime was made known to Mendez. He became furious, and we had the more difficulty to appease him, that our address had deprived him of a victim whom he thought due to his just rage; time, however, and cooler reflections pacified him.

So soon as this storm was over, Madam de Verforand proposed to go and pass the summer season at my seat in Normandy. I desired my daughter would accompany us, but she could not think of leaving, for four months, a husband whom she loved. Let us indulge her in this ridicule; she had been educated in Spain, and though now an inhabitant of Paris, had not as yet got what we call the tone of high life.

We were mighty well amused in our country retirement, and how could it be otherwise, since we were there together? and to tell the truth, we were married people of the Gothic order, as well as my daughter and her husband. We tasted those pure and
peaceable

peaceable pleasures which the tumults of towns never furnish.

It is a common saying, that nothing is wanting to man but the faculty of prying into futurity ; I, on the contrary, am of opinion that such a knowledge would prove his misfortune, and thus I prove it : we were at that time content with the present, and consequently happy, which would have been quite otherwise, had we foreseen the misfortunes with which we were threatened.

Bartholomew, after having endeavoured for some time to get the better of his passion for Helena, from the certainty of not being loved, gave himself up to a frightful despair. Alas ! what is not an unhappy lover capable of ? He returned incognito to Paris, with an intention to find out Mendez and to take away his life. He took a lodging in the neighbourhood of his house, that he might the more readily find a proper opportunity of executing his design. As he was every evening upon the watch, he saw him several times coming home, but as he was in his coach and attended by servants, durst not attack him, because he was known and could scarce miss, as he was alone, of being secured ; this made him think of an assistant, a man of execution, and on whose courage he could depend. He
addressed

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addressed himself to one of those cut-throats who murder men for money ; for at Paris every thing is a trade. This companion promised that his combat with Mendez should not be doubtful.

The very next day my son-in-law came home on foot, at two in the morning, attended only by one footman with a flambeau. Bartholomew, who was in ambush about a hundred paces from the house, shewed him to his associate, who fell on the footman, and gave him two stabs with a poignard, of which he fell dead at his feet ; he then flew to the assistance of his employer, who was like to be roughly handled by Mendez. It happened that some of the horse-watch, who were pursuing a housebreaker, entered the street where this scene was acting ; the assassins hearing them, ran another way, and as Mendez was standing, when the watch came up, with his drawn sword by a man lying dead, he was directly secured and conducted to prison, notwithstanding his repeated representations of the true state of the affair. He sent to let his wife know where he was, who went to him directly. They agreed that she should go and throw herself at the feet of a great man, who protected our family, to beg he would procure her husband's liberty, and an order to arrest Bartholomew, whom he knew as
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they were fighting together. The desolate spouse was informed at the Nobleman's house that he was gone for fifteen days to his country seat in Champaigne. She returned with this bad news to the prison, ordering, in the mean time, post-horses to be put to Mendez's chaise, and the moment she got home, set out in it for Champaigne, attended only by a footman. Bartholomew was informed of this journey by an emissary whom he had employed to let him know every thing that passed in Mendez's house. He gave notice of it to his companion, telling him, he wanted to see Helena once more, to reproach her for having betrayed him. They set out directly with an intention to wait for her on the road, rightly judging that it would not be long before she returned. They stopt in the Wood of Bondi, where they discovered many convenient places for the execution of their horrid design. Bartholomew hid himself; and his companion, genteely dressed, and well mounted, went too and again in the highway. The fourth day he perceived the chaise of the unfortunate Helena. He approached and saluted her very respectfully, asking if she was Madam Mendez, and upon her saying she was, told her that her husband was got out of prison, that he had left Paris to come and find her in Champaigne, but that he had prevailed

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ailed with him to stop at his house, about three hundred paces from the high-road, to which he would conduct her.

Helena brought Letters with her, by which she hoped to obtain her husband's liberty, and she was now told that she had no use for them. What joy ! she immediately ordered the postillion to follow this Gentleman, who told her on the way that he thought himself extremely happy in having found her ; that Monsieur Mendez had given him so particular a description of the chaise, that he had directly known it. When they were got into the thickest of the wood, Bartholomew appeared. The villains began the tragedy by stabbing the postillion, and were going to use the footman in the same manner, but he put spurs to his horse, and, though pursued, got off. They returned to the chaise and pulled Helena out of it more dead than alive : dragging her behind a sort of natural hedge, the furious Bartholomew with a poignard in his hand upbraided her with the most injurious language, and intended to plunge it in her breast, but his love was older than his wrath, and triumphed upon this occasion. Her beauty converted his indignation into an amorous rage, which he resolved to gratify by the most infamous violence. He proposed it to his companion, who was directly prepared

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red to share in his crime by assisting to commit it.

These two monsters glutted their libidinous eyes with the sight of their beautiful prey, who plunged in a sea of grief had not the strength to utter a single word, and only stretched out her arms as if she meant to implore their pity.

Great God, who art pleased to afflict us in thy wrath, give us leave to bewail our miseries ! Can I finish the description of such a dismal scene, of which I could not hear the recital without shedding, as it were, tears of blood ? Helena, my dear daughter, to what extremities did thy affection for thy husband reduce thee ! oughtest thou to have believed he was at liberty, since he did not tell thee so himself ? Yes, without doubt, because persons of integrity believe none are capable of deceiving them. How wert thou able to support these dreadful circumstances, which I cannot call to mind without horror ?

Despair gave Helena surprising strength to defend herself against these inhuman butchers, who, fatigued with her resistance, resolved to tie her to trees, which in that place were very near to one another. They had already made fast her arms with ropes, when they saw themselves of a sudden surrounded and attacked by four men on horse-back.

The preceding night three prisoners confined for crimes in the Chatelet gaol, had, by breaking a hole in the wall, made their escape; Mendez being in the same chamber took this opportunity of recovering his liberty, and kept his three companions with him till horses were got to carry them out of town, and as all roads were indifferent to them, they easily agreed to take the route to Champagne, where Mendez hoped to meet with his wife.

When they were near the Wood of Bondi they met with Helena's footman, who implored their assistance to his mistress, whom he had left in the hands of two murderers. They flew to the place, and arrived at the very instant that she was ready to lose her honour and her life. The two assassins were soon disarmed, and bound with ropes. The footman, who had found his master with the three others, and brought them to the place where the horrid scene was acting, took one of the prisoner's horses, his own being quite jaded, and rode full speed to a place of the Wood where the Maréchaussée had a lodging place, and where they constantly resided for the security of travellers. After long waiting they arrived, took into their charge the two murderers, and let Mendez, his wife, and the three others go where they
thought

thought proper, after giving in their names and places of abode.

Helena was put into her chaise, and her footman took the postillion's place, Mendez and his three companions escorting her on horseback. The night was far advanced and very dark, so that it was a considerable time before they reached the highway.

When Bartholomew and his companion were subdued and disarmed, the prisoners who accompanied Mendez had taken the two pair of pistols which were found on them before the arrival of the Maréchaussée, to whom they did not deliver them; and upon pretence of retiring further from Paris, they left Mendez and his wife and took a by-road; but about a hundred paces from thence they appeared with cocked pistols and demanded their money.

Mendez, highly provoked, drew his sword, not imagining that they would fire as the Maréchaussée were as yet within hearing. His vivacity was his ruin. They fired two pistols, one at him, and another at his wife, and both were unhappily killed. Such was the end of the unfortunate Helena, whose name, still dear to my heart, recalls to my memory, in a moment, all my former pleasures and pains. Mendez was dear to me, because he was so to my daughter, and my

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my regret did not separate two persons whom my tenderness had united.

The robbers spared the footman because they thought he might be of use to them ; but his life was granted upon condition that he should conduct them to Mendez's house, and assist them in carrying off all that they could find that was portable ; he agreed to what they pleased, but the next morning, while they were asleep, went out of the inn where they had lodged, and ran to inform the rest of the servants at his master's house of the misfortune which had happened, and afterwards took post to come and let me know the tragical and heart-breaking story.

It is impossible to represent the grief, the despair, and, in short, all the passions with which I was agitated at that time. Madam Verforand was with child, I knew her affection for Helena, and was afraid of the consequences of her affliction. I did what I could to prevent her taking notice of my grief ; but I was a father, my tears were often like to betray me, and it was impossible for me to master my concern so as to conceal it entirely from her. She shared in it without knowing the cause, and her disquiet made me suffer the more, in that I durst not let her know what occasioned mine. There were certain moments, that, not able

to bear the thoughts of seeing what she suffered through my reserve, I was opening my mouth to tell her the dismal tale, but at once I shut it again, reflecting how much she was attached to my children; and this forced me to be silent, notwithstanding her complaints of my not having that confidence in her which she expected; however, as she joined uncommon knowledge to the height of good-nature, she employed both in comforting me, in general, upon all the afflictions to which we are, or can be liable in this stage of life.

Great troubles are equally productive of rashness and imprudence, as great pleasures. I had taken care to keep Mendez's servant concealed from her, but I had taken no measures against the indiscretion of my friends. I received a great many letters, by which I saw several people were informed of the misfortune which afflicted me, and which they wanted I should know; for compliments in such cases mean nothing else. They are the same for friends, acquaintances, and indifferent person. I once knew a man despised both in his character and station, who recovering out of a distemper for which no mortal was grieved, found in his porter's list to the number of seven thousand persons who had come, during his illness, to enquire about his health.

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After opening about twenty letters, I be-
thought me of preventing Madam de Verfor-
rand's receiving any from the same people,
who were polite enough to make me lose in
a moment the fruit of my constraint for a
week. Alas! the blow was already given.
I was told that a great many letters had been
delivered to her; I ran to her apartment.
Heavens! what spectacle offered to my eyes!
all my senses are confounded with the thoughts
of what I am going to relate. My dear
spouse without motion, and almost without
life, stretched on the floor. A torrent of
tears overspread her countenance, already co-
vered with the paleness of death. A stream
of blood ran from a wound she had received
in her head by a fall against the chambranle
of the chimney. I gave a loud cry, which
brought several servants into the room, who
found us both lying on the floor motionless.
The farrier of the village, who acted as a
Surgeon upon occasion, was sent for. He
found the wound in Madam de Verforand's
head very dangerous. He stopped the blood,
of which she had lost a great deal, but could
not recover her from the lethargy into which
she was plunged.

After he had done what he could to her, he
came next to me, and opening a vein, I re-
covered my sight and hearing, but could not
speak.

ſpeak. I paſſed ten hours in that frightful condition, in which the exceſs of grief makes us inſenſible of it. In fine, towards the evening the Phyſician and Surgeon of the town arrived, and by the means of different odorifics, and a ſecond bleeding, I recovered my ſpeech. In this they were more ſkilful, or, rather, more lucky than the farrier; for I believe in that trade good and bad luck make the only difference. They left me to go to the aſſiſtance of Madam de Verſorand, who, after ſuffering unſpeakable torments, died under their hands in bringing forth a child who only ſurvived her two hours.

A Monk of the order of St. Francis, the more eloquent that he had remained at table during the whole night, came at four in the morning to notify in direct terms that I was a widwer. At this word I came entirely to myſelf the better to feel my grief.

Monsieur de Prevol arrived in that inſtant of time from Paris, and forgot his own ſorrow to comfort me in mine. This brother, or, rather, this generous friend, wept with me for the irreparable loſs we had both of uſ ſuſtained, and I believe without him this day would have been the laſt of my life. He oppoſed my deſpair, and gave me all the conſolation that I was capable of receiving. My dear ſpouſe was for ever in my thoughts.

I ſaw

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I saw her, spoke to her, and my phrensy rose to such a height, that I could not be persuaded but that she was still alive. I was long struck with this idea, and I only owed to the habit of not seeing her the dreadful certainty of my misfortune.

Monsieur de Prevol forced me away to Paris. Every thing there recalled to my memory my whole family, whom I had lost in a few days. Wife, daughter, son-in-law, all were gone, for ever gone. These melancholy ideas, which haunted me night and day, soon made a great impression upon my health. I was attacked with a fever, which the art of the Physicians prolonged for a whole year, and from which chance alone recovered me; but this distemper destroyed my small remains of constitution.

When a woman is pretty, all pleasures court her. If she loses her beauty, or even her youth, she must, for some years, value herself upon the beauty and delicacy of sentiment; thereafter her business is, in some solitary corner to become devout, or set up for a Wit.

It is pretty much the same with respect to men; however, as age is not so much regarded in them as in the other sex, certain events only oblige them to quit the world. I was in this case. I felt the necessity of becoming

becoming wise, but I had not resolution enough to make my actions correspond with my thoughts; a new misfortune determined me. Dona Juanna was with child, she fell down a stair, and this unhappy accident killed both the mother and the child. I forgot my own misery to comfort my brother-in-law, and by that means acquitted myself of the obligations I had to him in a like case. As I was more reasonable than he, having had more time to reflect, I found that he carried his grief so far as to border upon extravagance. Our common friends stopped my mouth, by assuring me that I had been guilty of excesses less pardonable. It is thus we blindly follow the torrent of our passions, and that our eyes are never open but on the faults of others.

Monsieur de Prevol proposed our retiring together to a country-seat of mine in Champagne. I consented, and we set out in a little time after: the education of young Prevol took up all the time that we could steal from our grief. Walking, hunting, and fishing were our amusements, and we lived as content as we could be in the melancholy situation of our minds.

A reflection which occurred to me, made a breach in our system of conduct. The young Prevol, educated by two such melan-

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choly creatures as we were, could not be formed for the world as we wished, since the Agreeable is what is mostly valued in the character of a young man. According to the polite taste of the present age, he was to give himself up to the torrent of dissipation, and he did not as yet even know the meaning of the word, though he was very near his twentieth year. I had upon this subject a long conference with his father, of which the result was, that we should, for the future, pass the winter at Paris, and the summer in the country.

This project was exactly executed, and I saw, with pleasure, that the young man drew great advantages from the sacrifice that we made, in his favour, of our taste for retirement. He was seized with the small-pox, and this accident disturbed the peace we enjoyed. His footman wanted to treat this distemper in the way that it is to be cured, that is to say, in the method practised by poor people; but he was so dear to us that we durst not deviate from the regular system, of which the event is almost constantly fatal. We therefore sent for an able Physician, that is to say, one that kept his coach. For at Paris it is the horses that determine the merit of people of talents. One misfortune generally comes upon the back of another.

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The Physician called in a Surgeon and an Apothecary. With the assistance of these two Ministers he conducted the sick person to his grave in twelve days. This death renewed all our griefs, by carrying off all we had now in the world that was dear to us. Alas! this young man alone held the place of so many! In effect, what family could ever be better composed, or more united? Madam de Verforand, Madam de Prevol, Helena, Mendez, Monsieur de Prevol, his son and I, we all loved one another equally, we formed a perfect and delicious society. We both of us would have been glad that we could have accompanied young Prevol to the other world, and our grief would have certainly done the work, but for the reciprocal advices we gave to one another, and which neither of us could apply to ourselves; and I can safely say that friendship alone furnished me, at that time, with resources against despair.

I was born to undergo all manner of misfortunes, even before I had time to be afraid of them. The loss of Monsieur de Prevol was the only one now that could affect me, but the motives of our union were too powerful to admit of any apprehensions of our separation, but by the death of one or other of us. He left me, however, without so

much as bidding me adieu, and threw himself into a Capuchin Convent; which proves that excess of grief and of joy equally conducts us to folly.

Not that I pretend to blame those whom a spirit of retirement engages to consecrate themselves, in a particular manner, to the service of God, in the solitary cells of a melancholy cloyster. It is not here the proper place to enquire into the motives that determine such a choice; besides, I do not look upon myself as a person properly qualified to enter upon the examination of that dubious point. I shall therefore only, by the bye, beg leave to say, that methinks there is more merit in being an honest and good man in the world, than in a cloyster; and that, even by a principle of religion we ought to frame our conduct so as to edify those to whom we have given scandal by our irregularities.

The Guardian of the Capuchins came to tell me the news of Monsieur de Prevol's conversion. I ran to the convent, but he refused to see me. Two days after, he left this cloyster to go and bury himself in another which he had formerly seen in the remotest part of Provence. He wrote me a long farewell letter, in which, through a pompous heap of words, I could see
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nothing but that he was very piously extravagant.

When fortune has done her worst, we dread no more her frowns. This was my case. I felt all the rigour of my wretched condition, and I took a sort of pleasure in augmenting my sufferings. I wept day and night, I shunned society, I desired none other but that of my dear spouse and children. They were all alive in my heart, and their melancholy remembrance was my dearest occupation.

I sought solitude as the properest means of indulging an evil, which I esteemed my *summum bonum* in the world, but at length I found that the human heart has not strength enough long to support the gnawing torture of deep melancholy, and that either it or we must end. Reason dispelled the dark clouds of despair. The band was taken off my eyes, and I saw with a surprise, mixed with shame, the disorder of my mind, and the decay of my body. Some solid reflections made me conceive that the tranquility of the dead is not founded upon our tears and groans, but on the ardency of our prayers, when they are worthy to receive the benefit of them.

The question was to form a new plan of conduct. I was alone, and at that age when the society of women is not easily acquired,

nor agreeably preserved ; since I was bordering upon my fifty-fifth year. I enjoyed as good health as is possible for a man born rich, and who had lived fast. All my infirmities consisted in some rheumatic pains and fits of the gout, which have not since encreased. Even these are too much for one to be easy under ; but it must however be allowed, that I deserved more and worse.

My misfortunes having taught me experience, I for ever renounced being under the sway of the fair sex, and resolved to consecrate the remainder of my life to the cares that ought, during the whole course of it, to have been my principal occupation ; I mean the duties of religion. The pleasure of doing what one ought to do, supported me for some time, but I soon perceived that amusement was necessary for me, for me whose whole life has been one continual amusement. Reading filled up a large part of my time, and in an agreeable manner ; it is a happiness when one is a great reader not to fall into the madness of literature, so I call the taste we take for authors in reading their works, which is often but very superficially founded. I therefore mingled with the society of the Literati, and professed myself one of the learned members. I was now got into a circle of envious intermeddling persons whom
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it is much better to read, than to converse with. It is a common saying, that handsome women hate one another, and push to excess the jealousy of the trade; those who say so have never been initiated into the mysteries of the republic of Letters.

I gave twice a week dinners of wit, and I must say, to the honour of literature and learned persons, that on those days there was no vacancy at the table. I knew on what works the illustrious were employed. I was one in all the assemblies where new Tragedies were read. This is a pleasure which an author willingly does his friends, and all are such who admire him. We first dine, then hear the piece, applaud it, we even weep (such as can command tears) and we all cry out, that never any thing finer has, or can be produced. All these encomiums are by private convention, which is the reason that half of the public, not let into the secret, seldom confirm them.

Some bad treatment I met with, gave me a distaste to literature, or rather to those men of letters with whom I had been familiar. I retired to my closet, where I would have no other company but my books. The itch of writing seized me; I composed the history of my life for the pleasure of preserving fresh in my memory the events of it. The perusal
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gave me an opportunity of making reflections on the disorders of my youth, and I seriously resolved to make some atonement. The first thing that occurred to my thoughts in my reformatory scheme was, that the large fortune I possessed was but indifferently acquired by my Father ; this idea disturbed me not a little, until my Notary, a very intelligent man, proposed an expedient very capable of setting my mind at ease, which was, to give all I possessed to the poor, by appointing the general hospital my heir. I approved of this project ; it was pious ; I was growing old ; I had scruples ; this was enough to make me think it admirable. A man of good sense, to whom I imparted my design, desired a short time to consider of it. About a week after, he came and told me that my notary had been long soliciting the place of Trustee to the hospitals, and that he hoped to obtain it by favour of the ample succession which he was to procure to the poor. This Notary was rich, and I did not think myself obliged to contribute to the enlarging of his fortune, so that I dropt this scheme.

I next consulted an old President, who was very devout. He advised me to give my fortune to a religious house in the neighbourhood of one of his estates. He made vast encomiums upon those worthy Fathers, and exaggerated

gerated the austerity of the order, without telling me that they were no slaves to their rules. I judged proper to submit this new advice to the censure of my friend, who, after due information, came and told me, that this Judge had a considerable law-suit with the Monks that he recommended to me. That they were upon the point of stripping him of the greatest part of what he possessed in their neighbourhood, but had promised that if he could determine me to give them my estate, they would allow him to keep his own, that, besides, these Monks were but few in number and sufficiently rich. That I ought rather to make the poor of my own lands happy, who had a sort title to my riches. This advice was generous, and pleased me. I was agreeably employed in concerting proper measures for the execution of this last design, which I was now fully resolved on. I made a foundation in every parish of my estate for the education of youth, the care of the sick, the cloathing of the poor, and above all the marriage of girls, being persuaded that poverty is as great an enemy to chastity, as constitution.

I have now for twelve years enjoyed the pleasure of seeing my establishments prosper,
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and I am of opinion, that the happiness of the poor operates more for the repose of my parents, than cold prayers mumbled over, and in which the heart has seldom any share.

A gentleman of distinction, whose name is respectable for the services his ancestors have rendered to the State, has been so unhappy as to see his whole fortune vanish from his sight by disappointments and crosses, which a discreet and prudent conduct alone could render supportable. I have opened my purse to him, and it has furnished him wherewith to place in the service three sons begotten in a marriage of inclination, with a girl rich in virtue and in beauty. He is so much above me that I dare not offer him what I see he wants, but I supply his children with what is necessary to support them in the army as gentlemen, without their knowing from whence the assistance comes; and that my death may not deprive them of these advantages, I leave them by my last will about forty thousand livres yearly rent, which is all I have remaining after acquitting my foundations and rewarding my domestics.

I am now fixed in an agreeable retreat in Picardy with their father, where, far from the noise of a tumultuous world, we live as Christian Philosophers, wholly taken up with
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the thoughts of our last day: a future state is the chief subject of our contemplations, and the disorders of youth, make us consider it with terror.

M. de Verforand died about two years since, in the retirement which he mentions at the end of his Memoirs.

The End of the Sixth and Last P A R T.